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1. introduction

Purpose

Every nursing home resident deserves excellent care given with compassion and dignity. The Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes Campaign (Advancing Excellence) is a voluntary national effort to provide the best possible care and life for all nursing home residents. A key feature of the Campaign is that it involves residents, their families and friends, and other consumers to help achieve high quality nursing home care.

This guide is designed to help you—the consumer—increase your participation in the Campaign at both the nursing home and state levels. You may be a resident, a family member or friend of a resident, a long-term care ombudsman, a member of a citizen advocacy group (a group of consumer advocates that works to improve nursing home care), or another member of the community who cares about nursing home residents. The purpose of this guide is to give you specific ideas, resources and examples for how to get involved in the Campaign. The guide also includes ways to discuss care with staff in a nursing home and suggestions for keeping the focus on the resident in any work you may do with the Campaign in your state.

While this guide has been developed for consumers, it is also valuable for nursing homes and others in the Campaign who wish to involve consumers in improving quality.

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes

THE CAMPAIGN

The Campaign is a partnership between numerous organizations and individuals that started in September 2006. Campaign participants include consumers (residents, family members/friends, resident and family councils, long-term care ombudsmen, citizen advocacy groups, and other concerned members of the community); nursing home administrators and owners; nursing home staff; health care practitioners and professionals; quality improvement experts; state and federal agencies; and foundations.
While there have been national initiatives to improve quality in the past, never before has such a wide range of groups united in a coalition to focus on agreed-upon goals for quality and to track improvement. This is also the first time that consumers have been included in a nationwide effort for this purpose.

For more information about the Campaign, go to [http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/](http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/).

The Campaign operates at three levels:

**National level:** Thirty (30) organizations work together as a Steering Committee to set goals and guide the Campaign. Each organization participates in one or more working committees.

**State Level:** Local Area Networks of Excellence - called LANES - are responsible for carrying out the Campaign at the state level. Each LANE consists of a “LANE convener” - the organization that leads the state group - and LANE members. Members of the LANE include representatives from consumer, nursing home, professional and other groups, as well as residents and families themselves. LANEs help recruit nursing homes and consumers, promote the Campaign, and provide education and assistance. The LANE is the point of contact for the Campaign in each state and the place for you to turn for information about the Campaign and how to get involved. To find contact information for the LANE convener and LANE members in your state, go to: [http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=LANE_list](http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=LANE_list).

**Individual nursing home level:** The most important part of the Campaign is the effort to improve quality that takes place in nursing homes. Nursing home administration, staff, residents, families/friends, ombudsmen, citizen advocates and other consumers work together to achieve Advancing Excellence goals selected by the nursing home.

**GOALS OF THE CAMPAIGN**

There are eight goals in the Advancing Excellence Campaign: three “clinical” and five “organizational” goals. Nursing homes enrolled in the Campaign choose at least one clinical goal, one organization goal, and a third goal that is either clinical or organizational. The clinical goals relate to how well a nursing home cares for residents with certain conditions. They were chosen because of the great impact they have on residents and because they represent areas where nursing homes need to improve. The organizational goals focus on how the nursing home operates. These goals include stabilizing the workforce, measuring resident and staff satisfaction and involving residents in the care planning process.

After the nursing home selects goals to work on, it will evaluate its performance, set a target for performance improvement and then measure how well it achieves that target. For example, if a nursing home determines it has a pressure ulcer rate of 10%, it may set a target of 7% to be reached by the end of the year. Or, if a nursing home has a nurse aide turnover rate of 50%, it may choose a target of 40% to be achieved over the next 12 months.

The Advancing Excellence Campaign has a wealth of information and educational resources for nursing homes to use on its website.

Below is a description of each of the eight goals and a link to a consumer fact sheet for each goal.

**Clinical Goals**

**Reducing the daily use of physical restraints.** A physical restraint is anything used to keep a resident from moving around or getting to a part of the body. Examples include vest and waist restraints, chairs and foam pillows that prevent getting up, bed rails, and hand mitts. Restraints are
harmful and do not prevent falls or keep a resident safe. This goal involves finding other ways to care for residents so that the use of physical restraints is avoided or reduced.


**Reducing prevalence of pressure ulcers.** A pressure ulcer (a bedsore or pressure sore) is a dark or red area, a break or a deep, crater-like wound in the skin caused by pressure. Pressure ulcers can be dangerous and painful for a resident. As part of this goal, nursing homes work to provide residents with appropriate care in order to decrease the number of residents with pressure ulcers.


**Reducing symptoms of pain.** The purpose of this goal is to keep residents as pain-free as possible so that they can feel their best and enjoy life. By taking steps such as measuring pain, finding the cause, treating pain, and checking to see if the pain is relieved, nursing homes work to reduce the level of pain experienced by residents who are in the nursing home.


### Organizational Goals

**Increasing staff retention or stability by reducing staff turnover.** Increasing staff retention keeps experienced, competent staff and builds strong bonds between residents and staff. As part of this goal, nursing homes measure both how long staff remain (retention) and how many staff leave (turnover) and try to increase the number of staff that stay.


**Increasing use of consistent assignment.** Consistent assignment means that residents receive care from the same caregivers (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses or certified nursing assistants) almost every time those caregivers are on duty. Consistent assignment is linked to better quality of life and improved care for nursing home residents. When a nursing home focuses on this goal, it works to adopt consistent assignment for a unit or floor, a limited number of units, or for the whole nursing home.


**Promoting advance care planning.** Every resident has the right to participate in decisions relating to his or her care. This goal encourages the nursing home staff to have meaningful conversations with each resident and/or his or her decision maker regarding the resident’s wishes and preferences for care and services.


**Assessing resident and family satisfaction.** For this goal, nursing homes have residents and families complete a satisfaction survey and then use the information to improve care and services to residents (Assessing Resident and Family Satisfaction).

Assessing staff satisfaction. For this goal, nursing homes have the nursing assistants and other nursing home staff complete a satisfaction survey. Then they use the information to improve the work environment for the staff.


TRACKING CAMPAIGN PROGRESS

Clinical goals
The federal government (the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, referred to as CMS) collects data for clinical goals from each nursing home that receives Medicare or Medicaid money. These nursing homes must provide CMS with certain information at required times. The information includes a resident's clinical conditions (for example, pressure ulcers, restraints, and pain); functioning and abilities; and routines and preferences. CMS turns these data into 19 “quality measures” and reports them on its web site, www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/.

By looking at the quality measures for pressure ulcers, restraints and pain in both short and long stay residents over time and comparing the measures to previous quarters, you can determine if a nursing home is making progress in any of these four areas. (You can track progress for any Medicare and/or Medicaid-certified nursing home whether or not they are participating in the Advancing Excellence Campaign. You can also monitor quality measures for non-Campaign related conditions.) More information about quality measures is available at: http://www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/static/tabhelp.asp?language=English&activeTab=4&subTab=0&version=default

Organizational goals
Data about the organizational goals are not currently available online. To find out what progress a nursing home is making in setting targets, assessing resident and family satisfaction, increasing staff retention and adopting consistent assignment, you must ask the nursing home. While there is no requirement to share this information, nursing homes that truly want to partner with residents and their families and friends will involve them in their Campaign efforts and share Campaign results with them.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE CAMPAIGN TO CULTURE CHANGE

Advancing Excellence builds on the work, goals and successes of other national efforts to improve nursing home care and life, including the culture change movement.

Culture change involves giving each resident the care that is right for him or her; its goal is to create a home inside a nursing home. At the heart of culture change is the idea that the person—the resident—comes first. Life and care in a nursing home are shaped by what each resident wants and needs. Culture change also recognizes that certified nursing assistants (CNAs) are vitally important to good care and that residents and CNAs must be given the opportunity to develop relationships. For more information about culture change go to: www.pioneernetwork.net.

The goals of Advancing Excellence focus on the individuality of each resident and encourage better work environments for staff. This connects the Campaign to the culture change movement.
Importance of Consumer Involvement

The participation of residents, their families and friends, resident and family councils, citizen advocacy groups, ombudsmen and other members of the community is vital to the Campaign’s success for many reasons:

- Excellent care is possible when we know residents’ ideas about their care and how it can be improved. Residents provide us with direction. When residents cannot communicate for themselves due to dementia or other conditions, their families or friends provide us with that guidance.

- Involving consumers reminds us that the Campaign is about helping real people, and not just goals and data. This increases the motivation to succeed.

- Resident participation in choosing the goals the nursing home addresses ensures that the nursing home is working on issues that are important to those who live in the home.

- Goals are best achieved by including residents and families/friends as partners. In any organization, people who are affected by a proposed change want to understand what’s being changed and why. Giving consumers the opportunity to ask questions and shape the change can help make the change more successful and lasting.

- Expectations of nursing homes are raised when consumers participate. Higher expectations create stronger incentives for nursing homes to achieve their goals.

- Residents and their families and friends can provide ongoing encouragement and support to nursing homes. Their involvement creates a sense of team and everyone “pulling together,” making it more likely that a nursing home will achieve the goals they set.

- Involving consumers raises public awareness and increases the visibility of both the Campaign and its message. This brings more national attention to the issue of nursing home quality and increases public demand for good care. Greater visibility also makes Advancing Excellence accountable to consumers, and the Campaign more likely to deliver the excellence it promises.

- Finally, consumer involvement helps build the momentum that is necessary for success.

Organization and Content of Guide

This guide is divided into two sections: 1) consumer participation in individual nursing homes; and 2) consumer participation in the LANE.

To make the guide easier to use, the first section is organized by consumer type: nursing home residents and their families and friends; resident and family councils; citizen advocacy groups; long-term care ombudsmen; and other concerned members of the community. This allows you to go to the section that applies to you and to get the information you need in one place. The second section about LANEs contains information that applies to all consumers.

Strategies and ideas to encourage consumer involvement are presented in each part and online tools are included to help. The tools for the guide are indicated in blue and are underlined; you can access them by clicking on the blue text. (Note: Web site addresses are also in blue and underlined, but they begin with “www.”)
What Residents Say About Quality—

“Being considered a real person when being cared for.”

Resident
Sayre Christian Village Nursing Home
Lexington, KY
II. consumer participation in individual nursing homes

Here are ways that you can get involved in Advancing Excellence at the nursing home level and show that you care about nursing home quality.

Residents and their Families and Friends

You can:

✔ Learn about the Campaign and its goals by:
  • Reading the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and other information available on the Advancing Excellence Web site at www.nhqualityCampaign.org/.
  • Reading the materials identified on the Consumer Resource List. These materials relate to the goals and to nursing home care in general.

✔ Join the Campaign by:
  • Filling out the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards. You can send the completed cards to the LANE convener in your state. To find contact information for the LANE convener and LANE members in your state, go to http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=LANE_list.

✔ Find out if your nursing home is participating in the Campaign by asking the nursing home administrator or checking the Advancing Excellence Web site at http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=NH_list.

✔ Distribute the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign and Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to other residents and families/friends and ask them to join.
If Your Nursing Home Has Joined the Campaign

You can:

✓ Ask what goals the nursing home has selected and then ask the nursing home administrator and Director of Nursing what you can do to help achieve the goals. Share your ideas about what the nursing home could do to reach the goals or other goals you think the home should consider.

✓ Apply the information about the goals to your own or your relative or friend’s care, if appropriate.

• The Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals contain information about approaches that staff can take and questions that you can ask. Take the fact sheets to your or your relative or friend’s next care plan conference. Ask the questions on the fact sheets and discuss whether the approaches in the fact sheets are right for you or your relative or friend.

• Complete the Resident Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7 or Family/Friend Worksheets for Goals after reading the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals. These worksheets help you identify and share important goal-related information about you or your relative/friend with staff. The worksheets also assist you in thinking through how you can help staff do a good job of providing quality care. Take the worksheets to your or your relative or friend’s next care plan conference and use them to start a discussion with staff about your or your relative/friend’s care.

✓ Ask the resident or family council to hold an education session about the Campaign and a council discussion about the Campaign goals (see “Resident and Family Councils” section).

• If you don’t have a resident or family council in your nursing home, ask the administrator to hold a special meeting about the Campaign for residents and one for families/friends. Ask the administrator to explain the Campaign, talk about what goals have been selected, and have a discussion about how residents and families/friends can participate.

If Your Nursing Home has not Joined the Campaign

You can:

✓ Urge the administrator to enroll the nursing home in the Campaign and give him or her information about the Campaign and its Web site, www.nhqualityCampaign.org.

✓ Contact the ombudsman and/or citizen advocacy group in your area and ask them to urge the administrator to enroll the nursing home in the Campaign. You could also ask the ombudsman or citizen advocacy group to go with you to talk with the administrator about participating in the Campaign.

• To locate the ombudsman in your area or to find a citizen advocacy group near you, go to http://www.ltcombudsman.org/ombudsman or http://nccnhr.org/ombudsman.
Resident and Family Councils

If Your Nursing Home Has Joined the Campaign

You can:

✔ Learn about the Campaign by reviewing the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet at one of your meetings.

✔ Request a presentation about the Campaign. You can ask any of the following people to make the presentation:
  - The nursing home administrator or other staff (such as the activities or social services director).
  - The local ombudsman or member of a citizen advocacy group.
  - A member of the LANE. Contact the LANE Convener to make this request. You can get the name and contact information for the LANE convener at: www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=LANE_list.
  - A concerned member of the community who has joined the Campaign. Contact the LANE Convener to connect with an individual who would like to make a presentation.

The presenter can use Resident or Family Council Activity #1 as a guide in giving this presentation.

✔ Invite the administrator to 1) talk to the council about what goals the nursing home has selected and what the home is doing to reach the goals; and 2) have a discussion with the council about how residents or families/friends and staff can work together to accomplish the goals.

✔ Learn more about the Campaign goals selected by your nursing home and discuss ways to apply the goals to your own or your relative or friend’s care and help staff reach the goals. Ask any of the following people to help you lead that discussion:
  - The local ombudsman or member of a citizen advocacy group.
  - The nursing home administrator or other staff (such as the activities or social services director).
  - A member of the LANE.
  - A concerned member of the community who has joined the Campaign.

The discussion leader can use Resident or Family Council Activity #2 as a guide for this discussion.

✔ Monitor the progress of the goals in your nursing home. Ask the nursing home administrator to provide a monthly or quarterly report to the council about what progress has been made. (Note: you can see where your nursing home is with pressure sores, restraints and pain by going to the federal government website, Nursing Home Compare, at www.medicare.gov/NHCompare.)

✔ Continue discussing any new ideas council members have for how nursing home staff can reach the goals. Put those ideas in writing and share them with the administration.

✔ Ask your nursing home administrator to start an Advancing Excellence committee made up of administration, nursing home staff, residents and their families/friends. The goal of the committee is to:
• Brainstorm on how to improve in the areas selected as goals.
• Monitor progress.
• Provide feedback on what’s working and what needs to be changed.
• Provide ongoing support and encouragement for Advancing Excellence work.

✔ Celebrate progress! Have a “WE’RE ADVANCING TO EXCELLENCE!” party to recognize everyone’s good work. Invite residents, their families and friends, staff and administration. Write an appreciation note to the administrator and staff.

✔ Hold an “Excellence” Challenge in which residents are invited to submit a drawing, poem, essay, or photo about their idea of what excellence is in nursing home care. Use the NCCNHR 2007 Residents’ Rights Week Challenge packet for this activity.

✔ Hold an Advancing Excellence poster contest. Invite residents to make posters about the Campaign that illustrate their ideas about excellence. Use the NCCNHR 2005 Residents’ Rights Poster Contest packet for this contest. Display the posters and announce the winner at an “Expect EXCELLENCE” party.

✔ Hand out Advancing Excellence sign-up cards at council meetings and ask council members to join the Campaign.

✔ Set up a welcome table (perhaps with some cookies!) on a weekend day in the lobby or other place where residents and families/friends gather. Provide residents or visiting family members/friends with information about the Campaign and ask them to sign up. NOTE: This can also be an excellent opportunity to promote the resident or family council at the same time!

✔ Publish an article discussing the Campaign and encouraging residents or families and friends to join in your council newsletter. Report on Campaign progress once a quarter.
  • If you don’t have a council newsletter, ask the nursing home administrator to publish articles about the Campaign and how to join in the nursing home’s newsletter.

If Your Nursing Home has not Joined the Campaign

You can:

✔ Send a written request to the administrator from the council urging him or her to enroll the nursing home in the Campaign and providing information about the Campaign.

✔ Contact the ombudsman and/or citizen advocacy organization in your area and ask them to urge the administrator to enroll the nursing home in the Campaign or to go with council representatives to talk with the administrator about participating in the Campaign.

✔ Invite the administrator to your next council meeting and have a discussion about the Campaign. Express the council’s interest in having the nursing home join the Campaign. Ask the administrator to help you understand his/her concerns about the Campaign or reasons for not wanting to participate. If there is no change in the administrator’s position, thank him/her and bring the discussion to a close. Ask the administrator to attend a council meeting after a few months and again discuss the council’s interest in having the nursing home join the Campaign.
What Residents Say About Quality—

“Everyday life here is special for me because I can participate, continue my hobby interests and just have fun with other residents and staff. I feel safe here. I feel that our place has become a real home and family to me because staff shows me kindness and care about me.”

Resident
Lutheran Home-Hickory West
Hickory, NC

Citizen Advocacy Groups

You can:

✔ Join the Campaign so that you get the Advancing Excellence newsletter, The Campaign Advance. The newsletter will keep you up-to-date about the Campaign’s progress and accomplishments. To join, go to www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=registration_consumer.

✔ Ask your staff, members and volunteers to join the Campaign.

✔ Recruit your staff, members and volunteers to encourage other consumers to enroll by distributing the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to people in their communities, places of worship, civic groups, etc.

Example: United Senior Action of Indiana, a senior citizens advocacy organization, created a sign-up postcard that it distributed to its members at its annual convention. Members were recruited to take cards back to their community and ask people to sign and return them to the USA office. Efforts to distribute cards and ask people to enroll are ongoing.

in the Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes Campaign
✓ Distribute flyers about resident council involvement and family council involvement with Advancing Excellence. (The sample flyers provided with this guide are adapted from flyers developed by the Ohio Ombudsman Program.)

✓ Write a letter to the resident or family council president about your availability to present an educational session on the Campaign and to lead discussions about the goals.

✓ Serve as an Advancing Excellence presenter.
  - Make presentations about the Campaign to resident and family councils, after contacting council presidents to see if they would like such a presentation. Use Resident or Family Council Activity #1 to guide you, along with the PowerPoint presentation about Advancing Excellence for resident and family councils.
  - Give a PowerPoint presentation to community and civic groups.

✓ Be an Advancing Excellence discussion leader. After residents or families/friends have learned about the Campaign, work with the council president to select one or more goals to discuss. Using Resident or Family Council Activity #2 and Discussion Leader Instructions for the Campaign goal chosen, help residents or families/friends talk about ways that they can apply the Campaign goals to their or their relative or friend’s care and how they can partner with staff to achieve the goals.

✓ Train interested volunteers to be Advancing Excellence presenters and/or discussion leaders.

✓ Write a letter to the editor about the Campaign, its importance and how consumers can join. Identify the nursing homes in your area that have joined and encourage non-participating nursing homes to enroll.

✓ Publish a list of nursing homes in your state or area that have joined the Campaign.

✓ Publish an article about the Campaign in your group’s newsletter. (You can modify the “article about the Campaign for a community newspaper or agency newsletter” included with this guide.)

✓ Place information about the Campaign on your group or program’s website.

✓ Send the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to individuals contacting your group.

✓ Suggest residents and families/friends use the appropriate Resident Worksheets and Family/Friend Worksheets in trying to address concerns about pressure ulcers, restraints or pain. Guide residents and families/friends in how to use the worksheets.

✓ Organize a “Consumers Care” community forum on nursing home care. Talk about the Campaign and the importance of sending the message that consumers care about nursing home quality by signing up for the Campaign. Distribute Advancing Excellence sign-up cards and ask people to complete them before they leave.

✓ Write a letter to a non-participating nursing home urging participation in the Campaign. You could also meet with the administrators of nursing homes that are not enrolled and urge them to join the Campaign.
Long-Term Care Ombudsmen

You can:

✓ Join the Campaign so that you get the Advancing Excellence newsletter, The Campaign Advance. The newsletter will keep you up-to-date about the Campaign’s progress and accomplishments.

✓ Ask your staff and volunteers to join the Campaign.

✓ Help residents sign up for the Campaign when you, your staff or volunteers are in a nursing home.

  Example: The Ohio Ombudsman Program created Expect Excellence! enrollment forms that ombudsmen could easily take with them into nursing homes. After obtaining resident permission, the ombudsman assists the resident to complete the form. The ombudsman then registers the resident through the Campaign Web site.

✓ Recruit your staff and volunteers to encourage family members, friends and other consumers to enroll by distributing the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards or Expect Excellence! enrollment forms to people in nursing homes, churches, civic groups, etc.

✓ Write a letter to the resident or family council president to inform the council about the Campaign and to encourage the council to discuss the Campaign with their administrator.

  Example: The Colorado State Ombudsman sent a letter to the resident council president in each of the state’s nursing homes to tell them about the Campaign.

✓ Write a letter to the resident or family council president about your availability to provide an educational session on the Campaign and to lead discussions about the goals.

✓ Serve as an Advancing Excellence presenter.

  • Make presentations about the Campaign to resident and family councils, after contacting council presidents to see if they would like such a presentation. Use Resident or Family Council Activity #1 to guide you, along with the council PowerPoint presentation.

  • Give a PowerPoint presentation about the Campaign to community and civic groups.
Be an Advancing Excellence discussion leader. After residents or families/friends have learned about the Campaign, work with the council president to select one or more goals to discuss. Using Resident or Family Activity #2 and Discussion Leader Instructions for the Campaign goal chosen, help residents or families/friends talk about ways that they can apply the Campaign goals to their or their relative or friend’s care and how they can partner with staff to achieve the goals.

Train interested ombudsmen volunteers to be Advancing Excellence presenters and/or discussion leaders.

Write a letter to the editor about the Campaign, its importance and how consumers can join. Identify the nursing homes in your area that have joined and encourage non-participating nursing homes to enroll.

Publish an article about the Campaign in your group’s newsletter. (You can modify the “article about the Campaign for a community newspaper or agency newsletter” included with this guide.)

Publish a list of nursing homes in your state or area that have joined the Campaign.

Example: A local ombudsman in Ohio has an “Expect Excellence” column in her program’s monthly newsletter to volunteer ombudsmen. In the column she lists nursing homes in her area that have recently joined.

Send Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards or Expect Excellence! enrollment forms to individuals contacting your program.

Example: The Ohio Ombudsman Program sends Campaign information to all consumers who contact the program for assistance with nursing home selection or problem resolution.

Suggest residents and families/friends use the appropriate Resident Worksheets and Family/Friend Worksheets in trying to address concerns about pressure ulcers, restraints or pain. Guide residents and families/friends in how to use the worksheets.

Organize a “Consumers Care” community forum on nursing home care. Talk about the Campaign and the importance of sending the message that consumers care about nursing home quality by signing up for the Campaign. Distribute Advancing Excellence sign-up cards or Expect Excellence! enrollment forms and ask people to complete them before they leave.

Write a letter to a non-participating nursing home urging participation in the Campaign. You could also meet with the administrators of nursing homes that are not enrolled and urge them to join the Campaign.
Other Concerned Members of the Community

You can:

✔ Learn about the Campaign and its goals by:

- Reading the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and other information available on the Advancing Excellence Web site at www.nhqualityCampaign.org/.
- Reading the materials identified on the Consumer Resource List. These materials relate to the goals and to nursing home care in general.

✔ Join the Campaign by:

- Filling out the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards. You can send the completed cards to the LANE convener in your state. To find contact information for the LANE convener and LANE members in your state, go to http://www.nhqualityCampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=LANE_list.

✔ Distribute the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to your family, friends, neighbors, members of your faith community, civic groups and other individuals/groups you know and ask them to join.

✔ Write a letter to the editor about the Campaign, its importance and how consumers can join. Identify the nursing homes in your area that have joined and encourage non-participating nursing homes to enroll.

✔ Write a letter to a non-participating nursing home urging participation in the Campaign. You could also meet with administrators of nursing homes that are not enrolled and urge them to join the Campaign.

✔ Become a volunteer in a nursing home in your community and talk with residents about the Campaign.

✔ Contact your state’s LANE convener and ask about ways you can get involved in the LANE and/or in Campaign activities, including serving as an Advancing Excellence presenter or discussion leader.
What Residents Say About Quality—

“Quality of life means to me that I live my life at Life Care like I would live it at home. I like having my meals done for me. But more than that, I like being surrounded by kind and patient people at this stage of my life, and I have found this at Life Care. I also do not wish to be tagged with alarms and arm bracelets and they respect that. I find everyone who works here very patient and understanding which are key indicators of quality care and a quality living environment.”

Resident
Life Care Center of the South Shore
Scituate, MA
III. consumer participation in the LANE

The LANE plays an important role in leading and coordinating nursing home improvement efforts in each state. For this reason, your involvement in the LANE is important if these improvements are to be successful and reflect the needs and preferences of consumers. Here are ways that you—as a resident, family member or friend, member of a resident or family council, member of a citizen advocacy group, long-term care ombudsman or concerned member of the community—can participate in the LANE. Also included are activities that you can promote to help the LANE move nursing home care toward excellence, keep the focus on residents, and encourage other consumers to join the Campaign.

All Consumers

✔ Join your LANE if you would like to participate in discussing and planning statewide Advancing Excellence activities. LANEs are encouraged to have consumer participation.

✔ Advocate for the state ombudsman, members of any citizen advocacy group, and residents and family members/friends to join the LANE, if they are not already LANE members. Residents and their families/friends bring first hand consumer knowledge and perspective on quality to the group.

Example: A nursing home resident and family members have served as LANE members in Wisconsin.

✔ Encourage every member of your LANE to distribute Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to people in their own town/community.

✔ Represent your LANE at community events, such as health fairs. Put together an exhibit about the Campaign and your LANE. Distribute Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the Campaign, the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals, and the Advancing Excellence sign-up cards to promote the Campaign. Ask people to complete the cards when they stop by your display area.
Host a LANE meeting in your or your relative or friend’s nursing home or in a nursing home in your area and include time on the agenda to hear from residents and families about their perspective on the Campaign, the Campaign goals, nursing home quality, or other topic. Conducting the meeting in a nursing home gives both residents and families the opportunity to attend a LANE meeting, learn more about the Campaign, and become involved.

**Example:** The Wisconsin LANE has held meetings in nursing facilities. The first such meeting was hosted by a nursing home resident who served on the LANE.

Hold an educational session before a LANE meeting in a nursing home. Invite residents, their families/friends, and members of the community. Educate participants about Advancing Excellence and the role of the LANE. Ask people for suggestions for future LANE activities and invite them to attend the LANE meeting following the educational session.

Suggest that LANE meetings include a focus on the resident or family member/friend perspective.

**Example:** At the beginning of the Wisconsin LANE meetings, a resident and/or family member of a nursing home is invited to share their perspective. LANE members have said that this demonstrates their vision and keeps them aligned with it as they move through their activities.

Ask for the opportunity to share your thoughts/perspective about one of the Campaign goals or quality in general with the LANE.

**Example:** A nursing home resident on the Wisconsin LANE shared her experience in the nursing home and ideas about what the LANE could do to have an impact on the quality of nursing home care. To read this resident’s perspective and recommendations, go to [http://www.nccnhr.org/sites/default/files/advocate/policy-resources/Jacobs2007bio.pdf](http://www.nccnhr.org/sites/default/files/advocate/policy-resources/Jacobs2007bio.pdf).

Recommend that all LANE-sponsored teleconferences, trainings and other activities include a time for residents and their family members and friends to share their thoughts and perspectives.

Suggest that the LANE sponsor a teleconference for consumers on the Campaign or one of the Campaign goals.

Ask to present on a LANE-sponsored teleconference and request that residents and their families and friends in nursing homes in your state be invited to listen to the teleconference. Actively promote the teleconference.

**Example:** A nursing home resident and two family members on the Wisconsin LANE conducted a teleconference on resident and family satisfaction. The presentation was called “Satisfaction: The Secrets of Success from the Consumer Perspective,” and the target audience was nursing home staff and administration, residents, and families. You can listen to the presentation and view the materials at [http://www.metastar.com/web/Default.aspx?tabid=312](http://www.metastar.com/web/Default.aspx?tabid=312). (listings are in chronological order; look for this presentation listed in order as given on August 28, 2007)
Hold a LANE town hall meeting.

- Work with other members of the LANE to host a town hall meeting in your community. Publicize the meeting through press releases, public service announcements, flyers, and letters to community groups. The forum could include a presentation about the Campaign; an opportunity for participants to express what they believe quality nursing home care means; and information about how participants can become involved in the Campaign and work to improve quality. Participants could be asked to join the Campaign by filling out Advancing Excellence sign-up cards and turning them in at the meeting.

Create a Speakers’ Bureau. Give a PowerPoint presentation about the Campaign to community and civic groups.

Form a consumer committee as part of the LANE and generate ideas for recruiting and involving other consumers.

Send consumers who join the Campaign in your state a “Welcome to the Campaign” letter (by email or regular mail) that includes the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the Campaign goals and a copy of this consumer guide (or internet links to these materials). The consumer guide provides interested participants with a list of ways to become involved. After sending the letter, call people to personally welcome them and to encourage their involvement.

Train consumers who have joined the Campaign in your state on how to make Advancing Excellence presentations to groups or lead an Advancing Excellence resident or family council discussion on the Campaign goals.

Sponsor an activity-focused on excellence for residents around the state. Activities can be based on NCCNHR Residents’ Rights Week contests and challenges: NCCNHR 2007 Residents’ Rights Week Challenge packet and NCCNHR 2005 Residents’ Rights Poster Contest packet. (This week is always the first full week of October.)

Publish a quarterly newsletter for consumers.

- Create a short newsletter to keep people informed about the Campaign, learn what consumer activities are being conducted in the state, and tell consumers how they can get involved.

Write an article about the Campaign for a community newspaper or agency newsletter. Distribute it to key organizations, groups and local community newspapers and request publication. State and community groups could include: Area Agencies on Aging; disease organizations such as the Alzheimer’s Association; disability rights groups; unions; places of worship; etc.

Enlist State officials in recruitment efforts.

Example: The Director of the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services sent an email encouraging state employees to join the Campaign to all 2,000 agency employees. As a result, several hundred consumers signed up.
What Residents Say About Quality—

“Quality care in a nursing home is if it feels like home living, then you have quality care.”

Resident
Golden Manor Jewish Home for the Aged
San Antonio, TX
tools
to encourage
consumer participation
guide
for consumer participation in the
Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes Campaign
Why Consumers Should Get Involved in the Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes Campaign

What is Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes?
Advancing Excellence is the largest, voluntary group of its kind working together in every state to improve the quality of care and life for nursing home residents. Directed by 30 national organizations representing providers, professional groups, consumers (residents, families and friends), advocates, employees, and government agencies, the Campaign has organized a coalition of local stakeholders, called a LANE (Local Area Network of Excellence) to lead activities in each state.

Why Should Consumers Be Involved?
The Campaign provides an important opportunity for consumers and nursing homes to work together as partners to improve quality. On behalf of their loved ones who are receiving care, the ideas and suggestions of family members, friends, residents and others on how care can be improved are needed. You, as a concerned consumer, can help by encouraging nursing homes to participate, providing input on which goals a nursing home might select, and supporting its efforts to improve resident care and quality of life.

What are the Goals of the Advancing Excellence Campaign?
From the following eight goals, a nursing home must choose at least three goals to work on. Improvements in these areas will go a long way towards improving resident care and quality of life.

1. **Staff Retention**: Nursing homes will take steps necessary to encourage and maintain a stable workforce to care for residents.
2. **Consistent Assignment**: Being regularly cared for by the same caregiver lets residents establish strong relationships with their caregivers, who can then see them as individuals. To maximize this important component of quality, nursing homes will employ “consistent assignment” of Certified Nurse Aides.
3. **Restraints**: Nursing home residents are independent to the best of their ability and will rarely be physically restrained.
4. **Pressure Ulcers**: Nursing home residents will receive appropriate care to prevent and appropriately treat pressure ulcers when they develop.
5. **Pain**: Nursing home residents will receive appropriate care to prevent and minimize episodes of moderate or severe pain. Objectives for long stay and short stay are slightly different.
6. **Advance Care Planning**: Following admission and prior to completing or updating the plan of care, all nursing home residents will have the opportunity to discuss the goals they have for their care or the kind of care they would want if they are no longer able to speak for themselves. This talk would be with an appropriate member of the healthcare team. The information should then be recorded in their medical record and used in the development of their plan of care.
7. **Resident/Family Satisfaction**: Nursing homes will ask residents and families about their experience with care and daily life in order to improve the quality of care provided in the future.
8. **Staff Satisfaction**: Nursing homes will ask staff about their satisfaction with their work at least once a year and when they stop working at the home. This information will be used to improve working conditions so there is less turnover and better care provided.
What Can You Do?

If you or a loved one is now or might soon be residing in a nursing home:

- Join the Campaign! Go to the Campaign website, www.nhqualitycampaign.org, and click on the Consumer button for more information on Advancing Excellence. Become a part of the Campaign to show nursing homes how important quality is to you.

- Explore the Campaign website at www.nhqualitycampaign.org, which has a lot of information that may help you learn more how you as a consumer can work with the nursing home to improve the quality of resident care. In particular, you may want to review the new Consumer Tip Sheet, and the Consumer Action Plan with its many tools and resources.

- Review the Consumer Fact Sheets for each of the eight goals; these are on the Campaign website and will provide you with a better understanding of what participating nursing homes are working on.

- If you have a particular nursing home in mind, check the list of participating nursing homes on the Campaign website, or ask the administrator or director of nursing (DON) if the nursing home has joined the Campaign.

- If the nursing home is participating, thank the administrator or director of nursing for their commitment! Then, find out what goals have been chosen, and discuss the steps will be taken toward meeting the goals the nursing home has selected.

- If your nursing home is not participating, encourage the administrator or corporate office to sign up.

- Show your commitment to excellence by going to the Advancing Excellence website and joining the Campaign. By signing up you will receive free updates on the Campaign and you will have access to information about the Campaign.

- Talk with other residents, family members and friends. Tell them about the Campaign and get them involved, too.

- Share the consumer information available on the Campaign website with the resident and family councils of the nursing home.

- Get in touch with your state LANE and become involved in its statewide activities. (You can find out who is leading your state LANE on the Campaign website.)

- Visit the Advancing Excellence website regularly for updated information and resources. If you have questions and the nursing home is not able to answer them, contact your local ombudsman (www.ltcombudsman.org).
FAST FACTS: Staff Retention

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet explains why nursing home staff retention is a key factor in providing quality care to residents of nursing homes.

What does staff retention mean?
Staff retention means that a nursing home’s certified nursing assistants (CNAs), nurses and other staff members have worked in the nursing home long enough to learn each resident’s needs and preferences. Experienced staff members know the nursing home’s routines and practices.

Nursing homes measure both how many staff stop working at the home (“turnover”) and how long staff have stayed (“retention”) in the same or similar jobs. A nursing home with high turnover rates means that new caregivers are constantly being hired and trained.

By increasing staff retention, a nursing home can keep experienced, competent staff and that helps build strong bonds between residents and staff. Consistent caregiving is possible with a stable staff. Most residents are more comfortable with caregivers who know their personal preferences and caregiving needs.

How is staff retention improved?
Staff retention is improved by increasing the number of consistent, well-trained and compassionate employees who stay at the nursing home. Of course, it is not possible for every staff member to stay at the same nursing home forever. People change jobs for many reasons—to go to college, retire or move. Some people do not have the skills or knowledge to work with residents of a nursing home. Nursing homes should not hold on to staff just to improve their retention rates.

What should you know about increasing staff retention?
The challenges every nursing home faces in holding on to devoted, well-trained and compassionate caregivers are similar to the challenges faced by every business and employer:

- Pay and benefits must be sufficient to support a family.
- Staff should feel respected, valued and supported by their supervisor and the nursing home management.
- Initial and ongoing training must be relevant and build skills and knowledge.
- Workloads must be fair, balanced and predictable.

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Find out if your nursing home is part of the Advancing Excellence Campaign. To sign up or get more information, go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org.
How does retention benefit residents?
- Residents don’t have to explain to new caregivers how to care for them day after day.
- Staff can anticipate needs and respond more quickly, confidently and naturally, when they know the residents.
- Residents are more comfortable with the intimate aspects of care when they know their caregivers.
- Residents with dementia are much more comfortable with familiar caregivers.
- Residents’ relationships with staff are strengthened.

How does retention benefit nursing home staff:
- Caregivers know what residents want and need. They can give better care and be more organized in their work with team members they know.
- Caregivers are less likely to be working with “temporary” nurses or CNAs who are not as familiar with nursing home routines.

How does retention benefit nursing homes:
- Increased staff retention reduces the time and costs of advertising, interviewing, hiring and training new staff. It costs about $3,500 to replace each CNA.
- Increased staff retention means less spending to hire “temporary” workers.
- Satisfied staff members help recruit other good workers. There are nursing homes in the country that have waiting lists of CNAs who want to work there.
- Satisfied staff translates into better care and image in the community.

What questions should you ask about staff retention?
- Ask residents if they have a CNA who has cared for them for a long period of time. If the resident can’t answer, talk with a family member.
- Ask the management and nursing staff how long have you worked here?
- Ask the director of nursing or administrator about the home’s turnover or staff retention rates and ask if they have plans for improving them.

How can you encourage staff retention?
- If the nursing home does not have a staff retention plan, encourage the director of nursing and the nursing home administrator to start by focusing on one job category (such as nurses or CNAs).
- Family and resident councils can work with the home to create new and different staff recognition programs, secure more and better training opportunities for staff and conduct staff surveys.
- A guide on retaining staff, Staff Stability, is available to nursing homes on the Advancing Excellence Web site. The guide provides practical tools for immediate and long-term use to retain competent and compassionate caregivers.
FAST FACTS: Consistent Assignment

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet explains why it is important for residents to get the same caregivers most of the time.

What does consistent assignment mean?
Consistent assignment means that residents see the same caregivers (registered nurse, licensed practical nurse or certified nursing assistant) almost every time they are on duty. Many residents are more comfortable with caregivers who know and understand their personal preferences and needs. Consistent assignment is primary assignment.

What should you know about consistent assignment?
Consistent assignment is a key step in giving care that is centered on the resident. It builds strong relationships between residents and staff, which are central to better care. A nursing home adopts consistent assignment to strengthen relationships between individual residents, their families, friends and the caregivers. Staff who take care of the same residents are happier in their jobs and tend to stay in their jobs.

How does consistent assignment benefit residents?
- Residents don’t have to explain to new staff how to care for them day after day.
- Residents feel more comfortable with the intimate aspects of care.
- Residents feel more secure with caregivers they know.
- Residents with dementia are much more comfortable with familiar caregivers.
- Residents and their families develop relationships with staff over time.

How does consistent assignment benefit caregivers?
- Caregivers know what each resident wants and needs. They can give individualized care and are more organized in their work.
- Nurses and nursing assistants who work with the same residents most of the time are more likely to notice slight changes in health. This can prevent more serious health problems in the future.
- Caregivers are more likely to understand and respond to the behaviors of residents with dementia. This is important because residents with this condition often let others know what they want and need through their actions.
- Staff members prefer consistent assignment as it lets them better connect to a resident they care for.

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Find out if your nursing home is part of the Advancing Excellence Campaign. To sign up or get more information, go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org.
How does consistent assignment benefit nursing homes?
- Staff get to know routines and develop a relationship with assigned residents and others. This makes a better workplace and a better home for residents.
- Caregiver absences are reduced. Staff are more likely to stay in the job when meaningful relationships develop as they know they are being counted on by others in the home.

How do nursing homes achieve consistent assignment?
Many homes that use consistent assignment stop rotating nursing assistants and nurses from one neighborhood, wing or floor every few weeks. Homes instead assign staff to one area of the home so that they can serve one group of residents. These consistent assignments apply to nurses and nursing assistants. This also can apply to housekeeping, dietary and other members of the team.

Of course, it is not possible for the same nursing assistant or nurse to work the same shift every day of the week. Staff need time off or may need to change their work hours. As a result, residents may see the same team of caregivers during the week. But, they may see a different team on weekends and holidays.

The Advancing Excellence Campaign believes a nursing home is successful when staff are caring for the same residents on at least 80-85 percent of their shifts. This means on at least four of five days, evenings and nights, the resident has the same caregivers.

How can you find out whether a nursing home uses consistent assignment?
- Talk with residents about whether they have a nursing assistant who cares for them most days. If the resident cannot answer or has dementia, talk with the family.
- Ask nursing assistants if they work with the same residents daily over the long term or whether they sometimes rotate to another group of residents.
- Ask the director of nursing and the nursing home administrator how nursing assistants are assigned to care for certain residents.
- Ask if the nursing home uses consistent assignment.

How can you encourage consistent assignment?
- Encourage the nursing home to join Advancing Excellence and chose consistent assignment as a facility goal.
- If the nursing home does not currently use consistent assignment, talk with the director of nursing and the nursing home administrator. Ask them if they would be willing to test it on a small scale first (one neighborhood, wing or shift of the nursing home).

www.nhqualitycampaign.org
FAST FACTS: Physical Restraints

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet provides information on how to avoid the use of physical restraints, which can be harmful to residents.

What is a physical restraint?
A physical restraint is anything that keeps residents from moving around or getting to a part of the body. Residents can’t remove restraints easily. Examples include vest and waist restraints, chairs and foam pillows that prevent getting up, bed rails and hand mitts.

What do residents and families need to know?
- Good care avoids the use of restraints.
- Residents, family members or guardians should help plan care to avoid restraints.
- In most cases, restraints should not be used to keep residents from wandering.
- Family and guardians don’t have the right to force nursing homes to restrain a relative.
- Restraints can be harmful if used inappropriately.

Why can restraint use be harmful?
- Restraining residents for long periods can lead to poor circulation, constipation, incontinence, weak muscles and bones, pressure sores, poor appetite and infections.
- Restrained residents enjoy life less. Restraints can cause agitation, less ability to do daily activities, less social contact, withdrawal, depression and poor sleep. Injury or death can occur from strangulation on a restraint.

What does a restraint mean to a resident?
Many restrained residents feel like they are being punished. Imagine being in a chair with a tray table that prevents you from rising. You cannot move or stand by yourself, or independently get a drink of water, lie down, or get to the bathroom.

Who is most likely to be restrained?
- Frail residents who have fallen or are unsteady on their feet.
- Residents living with dementia who wander or walk unsafely.
- Residents with very distressed behavior who seem to frighten others.
- Agitated residents who are a danger to themselves or others.
What is good care for residents without restraints?

For unsteady residents and those who wander unsafely, good care is:
- Having daily care that moves all joints and includes walking with certified nursing assistants.
- Providing safe and pleasant indoor and outdoor walking paths with places to sit.
- Reducing the use of wheelchairs except for transportation.
- Knowing the resident well enough to provide fluids, food, toileting, rest, pain treatment, company and activity without being asked.
- Decreasing the number of medications that cause a resident to walk unsteadily.
- Putting barriers in front of other residents’ rooms who do not like wandering visitors.
- Engaging residents in activities based on their past interests and career. Busy residents don’t wander and disturb other residents. Some residents need night activities.
- Using low beds so residents can get out of them safely.
- Decreasing noise especially at night. Lack of sleep causes distress.
- Inviting the local Alzheimer’s Association in to speak so others can better understand residents with dementia. This helps make their behaviors seem less unusual and threatening.

For residents who are distressed and frighten others, good care is:
- Having staff who understand that some mental and physical conditions, including pain, are so severe that residents may act very distressed.
- Having staff who find and treat the cause of the distress such as infection or pain. These conditions can cause delirium, which can be life threatening.
- Having staff who weigh whether restraints should be used. During a medical emergency, restraints may be an option. However, staff must get an order from the resident’s doctor and notify the family or guardians of the situation as soon as possible.
- Carrying out a plan for removing the restraints as soon as possible.

How can residents and family help plan care to avoid or reduce restraint use?
- Ask about and attend care plan meetings.
- Share with staff what things make a good day for residents.
- Share with staff things that upset residents like early awakening, hunger, thirst or pain.
- Work with staff to plan care that keeps residents strong, busy and able to move around the home safely.
- Ask to have the same caregivers four days out of five. Residents are calmer with the same caregiver (see Consistent Assignment Fact Sheet).

Whom should residents and family ask about reducing restraint use?
- If only you or a few residents are restrained, ask the charge nurse (a licensed practical nurse or a registered nurse) on the unit for a care planning meeting to discuss reducing restraint use.
- If the nursing home uses many restraints, suggest to the director of nursing or assistant director of nursing that they join the Advancing Excellence Campaign.
- Find help to reduce restraint use gradually throughout the nursing home at http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org.
- Go to the Nursing Home Compare Web site (http://www.medicare.gov/nhcompare) to find out how many residents in your nursing home were restrained.

www.nhqualitycampaign.org
FAST FACTS: Pressure Ulcers

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million residents. Nursing homes, and nursing home staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet can help residents and family members understand the importance of preventing pressure ulcers.

What is a pressure ulcer?

A pressure ulcer (a bedsore or pressure sore) is a dark or red area, a break or a deep, crater-like wound in the skin caused by pressure. Pressure ulcers usually develop over bony parts of the body – the tailbone, hips, heels, elbows, shoulders.

Factors that may increase the risk of getting pressure ulcers include:
- Sitting or lying too long in one place
- Sitting in wet clothing or a wet bed
- Not getting enough food and water
- Having many chronic conditions at one time
- Using multiple medications that cause drowsiness, confusion or loss of appetite
- Using physical restraints

Pressure ulcers can be dangerous and painful for a resident, in part because broken skin can allow infection into the body. If untreated, pressure ulcers can deepen and even expose the bone. Deeper ulcers may be hard to heal or may not heal at all. Sometimes, pressure ulcers can lead to serious medical complications and even death.

What is the best care for preventing pressure ulcers?

Some residents have pressure ulcers when they arrive at a nursing home. Residents without pressure ulcers on arrival may develop them later on. Skin changes and pressure ulcers can develop quickly. Routine skin checks are a key to good care.

What can consumers do?

- Make sure homes have policies in which residents’ skin is checked:
  - Within 24 hours of admission
  - On a regular schedule
  - At least weekly, and more often if they can’t get out of bed or reposition themselves
  - Whenever their condition changes

- Make sure at-risk residents are closely watched by staff, especially those that:
  - Can’t move, don’t move often or are restrained
  - Can’t eat or drink on their own
  - Are incontinent (not able to control their bladder or bowel)
  - Have active acute medical or psychiatric conditions (e.g., pneumonia, delirium)
• **Consumers can make sure residents:**
  - Get enough food and fluid
  - Go to the toilet as needed
  - Have their skin gently cleansed
  - Move as much as possible
  - Are turned at least every two hours in bed; every hour while up in a chair
  - Are checked carefully and often for complications of their medications
  - Are turned gently to prevent damage to frail older skin

**What should you see staff doing to treat pressure ulcers?**

- Certified nursing assistants (CNAs) looking for and reporting early signs of pressure ulcers.
- Licensed nurses (RN, registered nurse, or LPN, licensed practical nurse) describing each pressure ulcer and how it’s being treated in the resident’s record and checking pressure ulcers daily.
- Nursing home staff using pressure reducing or relieving devices or techniques to protect the bony parts of the body. You should look for staff to be using a pillow to lift heels off the bed or a special bed, mattress or chair cushion that has foam or gel added.
- For residents with dementia, the pain and discomfort from pressure ulcers may lead them to resist care. They cannot say they are in pain the way other residents can. Staff treating patients with these conditions need to pay attention to those signs as potentially communicating pain from a pressure ulcer.

**How can residents and families help?**

Pressure ulcers are hard to prevent and staff need your help.
- Go to the care plan meeting to be involved in planning your or your loved one’s care.
- The less you or your family member can move without help, the more likely a pressure ulcer will develop. If appropriate, inspect the skin yourself when you are helping with care.
- Know the moving or turning schedules and support staff in carrying them out.
- Let staff know if you or your relative is wet, thirsty, hungry or in pain. If your family member has dementia, tell staff how he or she communicates discomfort. Always ask how you can help.
- Be familiar with the medications you or your family member are receiving, including major side effects that can affect alertness, appetite, weight, hydration, mental function, or cause dry or itching skin.

**Whom should you go to ask questions?**

Ask the CNA caring for you or your family member, the RN or LPN charge nurse on the unit or discuss with the doctor in charge of your or your family member’s care. If you still have questions, go to the director or assistant director of nursing, or speak with the facility’s medical director.

www.nhqualitycampaign.org
FAST FACTS: Pain Management in Nursing Homes

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet provides information on how to manage pain effectively and safely in a nursing home.

How to recognize when a resident is in pain

Pain is an unpleasant experience that affects many parts of a person’s life. Pain can come on suddenly from an injury such as a bruise or broken bone. It may also be chronic as in a disease like arthritis or cancer. Some people have both kinds of pain.

Pain is difficult to measure and treat. Residents with pain can be depressed, sleepless, restless, distressed or lose their appetite. Treating pain is important. If you don’t treat pain, it can make a person’s health worse and decrease their activity and quality of life.

What is the best care for residents who have pain?

Consumers should make sure staff ask questions such as:

- Do you have pain?
- Describe your pain.
- What does it feel like?
- How bad is the pain? Is it pinching, dull and aching or sharp and stabbing?
- Do you have pain all the time?
- Does the pain come and go?
- What makes your pain better or worse?

Consumers should make sure staff monitor residents for signs of pain and observe how residents walk, move from the bed to a chair, eat and go about other daily activities.

Staff should also pay close attention to residents who can’t talk or have dementia. These residents may moan, cry or scream when in pain. They may hold or rub a part of the body that hurts. Residents with pain may stop doing activities or change their routines.

Consumers should make sure staff try to find the cause of each resident’s pain

- A physical examination should be done to identify the cause of the pain.
- Tests, including blood tests or x-rays, should be conducted if needed.

Consumers should make sure staff work with residents and families to treat pain

- Residents, families and caregivers should discuss pain in care planning meetings.
- Pain care planning should include nursing assistants who know the resident well. These caregivers can help identify and relieve pain (see Consistent Assignment Fact Sheet).
Consumers should make sure staff always treat each resident’s pain

- Heat, cold, or massage can relieve pain.
- Drugs are also used to relieve pain. However, most pain drugs have side effects. These include: constipation, loss of appetite, listlessness, drowsiness, or confusion. Pain drugs can cause falls.
- Most side effects can be fairly well controlled. The rule of thumb with pain drugs is to start with the lowest dose and increase the dose slowly.

Consumers should make sure staff check frequently to make sure the pain is being relieved

- Staff should routinely ask residents if they are having pain and also ask residents or family members to report pain.
- Staff should recognize that not all residents will talk about pain or seek treatment for it.
- Men and women may report pain differently and religious beliefs and cultural traditions could affect how people talk about pain.
- Some residents, families and staff worry about drug side effects, addiction and dependency. Others fear bothering the nursing staff.
- Staff should be able to reassure families and residents about managing side effects and fears.

What questions should you ask staff about how they manage pain?

- How do you measure pain? How often?
- Do you keep a written record of each resident’s pain?
- How do you involve residents and families in developing the care plan?
- How are you treating the pain? How do you know the treatment is working?
- What changes are made if pain is not relieved?
- What do you do about side effects from pain drugs?

Whom should you ask about pain relief?

The director of nursing and nursing home administrator can answer questions about how staff measure and treat pain. Go to the federal government’s Nursing Home Compare Web site (http://www.medicare.gov/nhcompare) to find out how well a nursing home manages residents’ pain.

www.nhqualitycampaign.org
FAST FACTS: Advance Care Planning

Advance care planning gives you a voice if you can no longer speak for yourself and allows you to plan for and express your wishes about future care. Advance care planning can explain the care you want provided after a serious accident, an illness, or when you can no longer make decisions for yourself.

What can you do to prepare?

- **Discuss Your Wishes:** Talk with family, friends and caregivers about personal concerns, values and spiritual beliefs regarding end-of-life or emergency care. While this can be hard to do, it is important to discuss things like:
  - What quality of life means to you;
  - What kind of medical procedures you want;
  - What kind of medicines, if any, you want for pain or other conditions you have; and
  - Whether you wish to use hospice care to keep you comfortable at the end of your life.

  You might think family members and the doctor already know how you want to be treated at the end of life but a frank discussion allows you to be certain they know what your wishes are. Having a plan in place makes it easier for family members and doctors to carry out your decisions about the level and type of care you want.

- **Plan Ahead:** Make health care decisions ahead of time. This lets you choose the kind of health care you want or don’t want. No one has to guess what kind of care you’d prefer at the end of life or after a serious illness or when you are not able to communicate your desires.

- **Identify Your Advocate:** Pick a person to make health care decisions for you when you can’t make them yourself. This person is sometimes called a proxy. The person you choose needs to be able to make decisions based on your values and wishes about care. A good proxy is someone who knows you, will likely outlive you and someone you trust. This person only makes decisions for you when you are unable to make them yourself.

- **Review and Update:** Periodically look over your advance care plan and update it when your situation changes or if you change your mind. You should also check in with your designated advocate periodically to make sure they are still able and willing to carry out your plan.
Why is advance care planning important for residents?
Advance care planning allows you to express your choices, personal concerns, values and spiritual beliefs so that your wishes are known. It can be whatever you want it to be—from aggressive medical procedures to care that keeps you comfortable. Using an advance care plan can relieve family and caregivers of the stress of guessing what kind of care you want at the end of life.

Why is advance care planning important for nursing homes?
Having information about you and your wishes helps the nursing home respect your choices and provide you with the care you’ve decided on. Having shared your wishes by talking, choosing someone to speak on your behalf and by writing up a plan, your caregivers will know they are caring for you in the way that you would want.

What happens if I don’t express my wishes through an advance care plan?
The decision to express your wishes is up to you. If you do not have such a plan, family, caregivers and people you may not know will have to make their best guess about the care you would choose. Without a designated person to speak for you, caregivers may not agree about the course of action and may make decisions you wouldn’t like.

What if I don’t know what I want?
There are people to help and good information available about advance care planning. Your doctor, nurse, clergy, attorney, Ombudsman or social worker can give you information and share sample documents with you. Your public library will also have information.

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Advance Care Planning Resources

National Healthcare Decision Day
http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionday.org/resources.htm, or any of the following organizations:

AARP: End-of-Life Planning
1-888-687-2277

Aging with Dignity: Five Wishes
1-888-594-7437

American Bar Association: Tool kit for Health Care Advance Planning: 10 Legal Myths about Advance Medical Directive
1-800-285-2221

1-202-833-1100

American Hospital Association: Put It In Writing
1-800-242-2626

800-309-3282

Caring Connections: Advance Care Planning: Financial Information; Planning Ahead Checklist; Free Brochures
1-800-856-8898

Center for Practical Bioethics: Caring Conversations Workbook
1-800-344-3829

Medlineplus.gov: www.medlineplus.gov, go to “Advance Directives”

National Cancer Institute: www.cancer.gov
800-422-6237

National Institute on Aging: End of Life, Helping with Comfort and Care
1-301-496-1752
FAST FACTS: Resident and Family Satisfaction

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the campaign goals, designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet explains the link between resident and family satisfaction and the quality of care at a nursing home.

Why assess resident and family satisfaction?

- A satisfaction survey is a formal set of questions about the care and services one gets in a nursing home.
- Assessing resident satisfaction is the first step in making changes or improvements in the quality of the care.
- This allows residents the chance to report their experience with care and daily life in the nursing home. The residents rate their satisfaction with the staff and the nursing home. Even many residents with memory loss or dementia can answer basic questions about their care well into the disease.
- Residents will report on areas that are important to them (for example, staff treating them with courtesy and respect) so homes know where improvements need to be made.
- Some nursing homes may choose to survey family members of residents for more information. Surveying family members is very important for residents who cannot respond independently (for example, residents with advanced dementia). The family also can often add information to the resident’s viewpoint. Research shows that family and residents’ views often differ.
- It is important to keep the focus on each resident and how to improve daily life.

What is considered satisfaction survey excellence?

- The survey should be tested so most residents understand questions the same way.
- The survey should be kept anonymous. Responses should be kept confidential.
- There are several good ways to conduct a survey (for example, face-to-face, mail, or phone).
- The survey method should be adapted to the residents’ different abilities to respond to the survey (e.g., blind, deaf).
- Residents with dementia may be able to complete a survey that is given by an interviewer face-to-face. But, they may not be able to complete a mail survey or even a phone survey.
- The survey results should state how many people responded to the survey out of all persons surveyed. The more people who answer the survey, the better the results.
- Survey results from residents should be presented separately from family results.
- The home should conduct the survey on a regular basis (at least annually).
What do satisfaction survey results mean to residents?

- A high overall satisfaction rating may be a mark of excellence.
- High ratings on items or groups of items important to the resident (for example, being treated with courtesy and respect) are also good indicators of high quality care.
- Survey results showing a high percentage of resident or family willingness to recommend the home to others may be an additional mark of excellence.

How do nursing homes use satisfaction survey results?

The nursing home should be able to explain how and when they will use the satisfaction survey results to make improvements. Consumers can ask these or other questions:

- How do they decide which results to act on?
- How do they set priorities?
- How do they set targets or goals for improvement changes?
- What improvements were made as a result of the survey?

What are some questions consumers should ask related to this goal?

- Does the home conduct a survey of residents and/or family members? If a home is not currently doing a survey, ask if and when they plan to conduct one.
- Ask for a copy of the survey and the results.
- Ask how surveys conducted (for example, by mail or in-person)?
- Ask who conducts the survey?
- Are the surveys conducted in a way that no one knows who answered the survey?
- Do survey results show a high level of satisfaction overall and in important areas?
- What changes has the nursing home made in response to survey results?
- Have the changes improved the quality of care or daily life of residents? How so?
- Does the state require all nursing homes to do a standard satisfaction survey?
- If yes, ask how this nursing home compares with other nursing homes in the state, area or region?
- If no, do other nursing homes use the same or similar satisfaction surveys to be able to compare the results with this nursing home?

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FAST FACTS: Staff Satisfaction

Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country’s 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes and to create a better workplace, especially for direct care staff. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the campaign goals designed to improve quality. This consumer fact sheet explains the link between high quality care and staff satisfaction.

Why is measuring staff satisfaction important?

Caregivers have challenging jobs. Learning what caregivers think, what they need, and how they would like to improve your nursing home is an important part of getting the best care in nursing homes.

- Understanding staff satisfaction is a first step to improve staff work environment and work assignments. A national survey shows that nursing home staff want a safe workplace, fair evaluations of their work, an engaged supervisor, an opportunity to express their opinion or concerns, and an ability to see changes in workflow based on their feedback.
- Staff satisfaction surveys ask about ways to improve the nursing home, how to best respond to staff concerns, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Using staff satisfaction surveys can lead to less staff turnover and to consistent staff assignment. This can mean better care for residents of nursing homes.

What makes for a good satisfaction survey?

- Survey questions should be tested to make sure that most staff understand each question. The survey should take into account the staff’s first language and culture.
- A good survey is one that assures confidentiality.
- The survey questions should be easy to understand and answer.
- The more people who answer the survey, the more meaningful the results. Staff from all units or departments should receive the survey.
- Staff should be surveyed at least every year.
What do staff satisfaction results mean to residents?

If the satisfaction survey met the requirements of a good survey, then:

- High ratings of overall staff satisfaction may tell you that staff get enough support, training, pay, benefits, and recognition for their work. It may also mean the nursing home includes caregivers in decision-making and strives to make the nursing home a good place to work and live.
- Low ratings of overall staff satisfaction can point to problem areas. Residents and family members can check back with nursing home managers to see if management is making changes to address concerns identified in the survey.

What are some questions I can ask the administrator?

- Does the nursing home conduct a survey of staff? If so, how often? If your nursing home is not doing a survey, ask if they will consider conducting one.
- Ask for a copy of the survey and results.
- Ask how are surveys conducted (for example by mail or phone)?
- Ask who conducts the survey?
- Ask if it is anonymous?
- Ask what the administrator thinks about the results?
- Ask if the administrator shares the results?
- Ask what changes has the nursing home made in response to the staff survey results?
- Ask if the changes improved daily life for staff and for residents? How?
- Ask if state law requires nursing homes to do a standard satisfaction survey? If the answer is yes, how does your nursing home compare with others in the state or local area?
Advancing Excellence Consumer Resource List

All resources are free unless otherwise indicated.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT NURSING HOME CARE

PUBLICATIONS

* Nursing Homes: Getting Good Care There. Sarah Greene Burger, Virginia Fraser, Sara Hunt, and Barbara Frank. NCCNHR. 2nd edition. 2002
  This book discusses how to advocate for quality nursing home care and includes information on pressure ulcers and restraints. Available for purchase. To order, call (202) 332-2275.

  These care recommendations define goals in six care areas, including pain and restraints, and present strategies for achieving them.

WEBSITES

* Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes www.nhqualitycampaign.org
  The campaign’s website contains information about the many different aspects of the campaign and includes consumer fact sheets; access to past webinars on campaign goals; state and national progress on the goals; the campaign newsletter, The Campaign Advance, and more.

* NCCNHR: The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care www.nccnhr.org, click on “Consumer Center” and “Fact Sheets”
  The NCCNHR website provides a wide range of resources for consumers, including fact sheets on assessment and care planning; the basics of individualized care; family involvement; and other topics related to nursing home care.

* Alzheimer’s Association www.alz.org
  The Alzheimer’s Association website offers information about Alzheimer’s Disease and how to recognize good care for someone with dementia; topic sheets and brochures on a variety of issues; and other resources.

* Pioneer Network www.pioneernetwork.net
  The Pioneer Network website is a resource for consumers, nursing home administration and staff, and others about culture change. The website includes a consumer guide for finding a nursing home that has adopted culture change.

* Nursing Home Compare www.medicare.gov/NHCompare
  This federal government website provides information about inspections, staffing and certain measures of quality for every Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing home in the country. It includes the government’s five star rating system for nursing homes.
Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing
www.consultgerirn.org/resources
This website serves as an online resource for geriatric nurses. It includes information on pressure ulcers, restraints and pain, as well as many other care issues. While the website is geared to nurses, the information can be very helpful to residents, families and other consumers.

MedQIC
www.qualitynet.org/dcs/ContentServer?pagename=Medqic/MQPage/Homepage
This is an online resource of information for improving care developed by the federal government. Consumers can find helpful information about a wide range of care areas, including pressure ulcers, restraints and pain. For each topic, there is a “Fast Facts” section that gives an overview and covers prevention, screening and treatment.

The Borun Center
www.geronet.med.ucla.edu/centers/borun/default.htm
The Borun Center provides training modules to nursing homes to help them improve in a number of different areas, including pressure ulcers and pain. Although the information is targeted to nursing home staff, consumers who want to learn more may find the modules helpful or may want to tell staff about them.

INFORMATION RELATED TO CAMPAIGN GOALS

Staff Retention
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Increasing Staff Retention

Better Jobs, Better Care
Institute for the Future of Aging Services: Building a Strong Long Term Care Workforce
http://www.bjbc.org/

Consistent Assignment
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Consistent Assignment

Change Ideas for Consistent Assignment
Developed by Lumetra.

A Case for Consistent Assignment
http://www.nccnhr.org/sites/default/files/family-member/Fall-R3-A-Case-for-Consistent-Assignment-article.pdf

Restraints
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Restraints
**NCCNHR Consumer Fact Sheet - Physical Restraint Free Care**

**Consumer Guide - Restraints: The Exception, Not the Rule - A Guide for Residents, Their Families and Friends to Promote Good Care in Place of Restraints in California Nursing Homes.**
Produced by NCCNHR: The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, supported by a grant from the California HealthCare Foundation. (Note: Although written for California, the information and care practices apply to nursing home care everywhere.)

**Pressure Ulcers**
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Pressure Ulcers

**Preventing Pressure Ulcers: A Patient's Guide**
AHCPR Clinical Practice Guidelines. Pressure Ulcer Prevention and Treatment, 1992. (Note: although this publication is from 1992, the material is still relevant and helpful.)

**Pain Management**
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Pain

**Advanced Care Planning**
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet – Advance Care Planning

**Assessing Resident and Family Satisfaction**
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet - Assessing Resident and Family Satisfaction

**Residents Have the Answers: Improving Quality of Life in Long-Term Care**
Developed by the Coalition for the Institutionalized Aged and Disabled and the Long Term Care Community Coalition. 2001. Includes a video, handbook and worksheets. Available for purchase. To order, contact the Long Term Care Community Coalition at (212) 385-0355 or http://www.ltccc.org/publications/ and scroll to section on “Educational Materials for Providers of LTC.”

**Staff Satisfaction**
Advancing Excellence Consumer Fact Sheet – Staff Satisfaction
Yes! I believe excellence in nursing homes is a top priority!
Sign me up for the Advancing Excellence Campaign!

A national campaign to improve nursing home quality of life and care
Visit www.nhqualitycampaign.org for more information
Goal #2: Consistent Assignment

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on consistent assignment.

✓ Think about how you would answer the questions below. If you want, write down your answers.

✓ Take this worksheet with you to your next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your care.

✓ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for you.

1. When you get a new aide for the very first time, what are the most important things you want the aide to know right away about you and your care?

Examples: I want my aide to know right away that …

• My bedside table with my phone and TV remote needs to be within my reach at all times when I’m in my room.

• I always have to go to the bathroom right after I eat.

• It hurts when I move and I need you to be gentle with me.

• I want my aide to know right away that …

2. If an aide is assigned to work with you on a regular basis, what things do you want the aide to know about you?

Examples: I want my aide to know that …

• I like a hot cup of coffee in bed when I first wake up in the morning.

• I like to take a nap before dinner.

• I want to do as much for myself as I can even though it takes longer.

• I want my aide to know that …
3. **How can you share that information with the aide caring for you?**

*Examples:* I can …

- Talk with my aide.
- Ask that the information be put onto my aide’s assignment sheet or into a bedside care plan.
- I can …

4. **What can YOU do to build a good relationship between you and your aide?**

*Examples:* I can …

- Share with my aide the information I want him/her to know about me.
- Show my aide pictures of my family and myself.
- Ask my aide about him/herself. Ask about my aide’s family.
- Ask for help nicely.
- Treat my aide with respect.
- Show appreciation for what my aide does for me.
- I can …

5. **What do you need so you can share information and build a good relationship with your aide?**

*Examples:* I need …

- My aide to have the time to talk with me.
- My aide’s participation in my care plan conference.
- My aide to be given information about me.
- I need …
Goal #3: Physical Restraints

How to use this worksheet:

☑ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on restraints.

☑ Think about how you would answer the questions below. If you want, write down your answers.

☑ Take this worksheet with you to your next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your care.

☑ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for you.

1. What should staff know about you that would help in avoiding or reducing the use of restraints?

   • My daily routine at home before I moved here was to
   • Things I really enjoy doing are
   • My favorite thing to do during the day is
   • I like to get up in the morning at
   • I like to go to bed at night at
   • The time of day when I like to take a shower or bath is
   • I like to rest during the day. My favorite time to rest is
   • OR …I don’t like to rest during the day
   • My favorite snack is
   • My favorite drink is
   • My favorite chair to sit in is
   • My favorite place to sit here is
   • Things that make me upset are
   • You can tell that I’m upset when I
   • Things that make me feel better when I am upset are

• Things that help me sleep well at night are
• The times I usually need to go to the bathroom are
• I also want staff to know that …

2. How can YOU help staff do a good job of avoiding or reducing the use of restraints in your care?

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give you good care!

Examples: I can …

• Share this information with staff at my care plan conference and with my aides.

• Participate in my care plan conference.

• Work with staff to plan care that will strengthen my muscles, if appropriate, and keep me as physically active as possible.

• Ask staff to place me in a comfortable chair.

• Let staff know when I want to participate in activities.

• Ask staff to keep the noise down at night so I can sleep better, if this is a problem for me.

• Ask for the same nursing assistants to care for me on most days and nights so we get to know each other.

• I can …

3. What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?

Examples: I need …

• The date and time of my next care plan conference.

• A comfortable chair.

• Activities that I enjoy.

• I need …
Goal #4: Pressure Ulcers

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on pressure ulcers.
✓ Think about how you would answer the questions below. If you want, write down your answers.
✓ Take this worksheet with you to your next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your care.
✓ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for you.

1. What should staff know about you that would help in preventing pressure ulcers?
   • My favorite drinks are
     • The times I prefer having something to drink are
   • My favorite foods are
     • My favorite meal of the day is
   • My favorite chair to sit in is
     • I can move around more easily in bed if
     • I can move around more easily in a chair if
   • When staff turn me in bed I would like them to
     • The times I usually need to go to the bathroom are
   • I also want staff to know that

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2. How can YOU help staff do a good job of preventing you from getting pressure ulcers?

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give you good care!

Examples: I can …

• Share this information with staff at my care plan conference and with my aides.

• Participate in my care plan conference.

• Tell staff when I’m thirsty or hungry.

• Know my turning schedule and help staff in remembering when it is time for me to be turned.

• Ask my nurse or aide to check my skin for red spots daily if I am at risk (more likely) to get pressure ulcers. (Your nurse or aide can tell you if you are at risk.)

• Report any red spots I see on my skin to my nurse.

• Tell staff when I need to go to the toilet or am sitting in wet clothing.

• Let staff know if I am constipated or have diarrhea; am losing my appetite; have dry or itchy skin; or am drowsy, dizzy, confused or thirsty.

• Ask for the same nursing assistants to care for me on most days and nights so we get to know each other.

• I can …

3. What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?

Examples: I need …

• The date and time of my next care plan conference.

• My call light within reach.

• Information about my turning schedule.

• I need …
Goal #5: Pain Management

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on pain.
✓ Think about how you would answer the questions below. If you want, write down your answers.
✓ Take this worksheet with you to your next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your care.
✓ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for you.

1. What should staff know about you that would help in relieving your pain?
   - Places where I feel pain are

   - Times when I feel pain are

   - My pain usually lasts for

   - Things that cause the pain are

   - Staff can tell I am in pain when I

   - I would feel more comfortable telling staff that I am in pain if

   - Things that make me feel better when I am in pain are
     (Examples: applying heat, applying cold, moving me so I am more comfortable; giving me pain Medications)

   - If I had to choose between feeling no pain, or being more alert, but feeling some pain, I would Choose

   - Staff will know my pain has been relieved when I

   - I also want staff to know that …
2. How can YOU help staff do a good job of relieving your pain?

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give you good care!

**Examples:** I can …

- Share this information with staff at my care plan conference and with my aides.
- Participate in my care plan conference.
- Tell staff when I am in pain.
- Do the best I can to describe the pain.
- Let staff know if the approaches they are using are or are not working.
- Tell staff if I am experiencing constipation, loss of appetite, listlessness, dizziness, confusion, or falls.
- Ask for the same nursing assistants to care for me on most days and nights so we get to know each other.

- I can …

2. What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?

**Examples:** I need …

- The date and time of my next care plan conference
- My call light within reach
- My pain medications given on time
- I need …
Goal #6: Resident and Family Satisfaction

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on assessing resident and family satisfaction.

✓ Think about how you would answer the questions below. If you want, write down your answers.

✓ Take this worksheet with you to your next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about changes that could be made so that your life at the nursing home and your care are even better.

1. Things I like about my care here are

2. Changes that would make my care better are

3. Things I like about my daily life are

4. Changes that would make my daily life better for me are

5. What can YOU do to let staff know what you like about your care and your life here and what changes would make things even better?

Examples: I can …

• Tell my aides.

• Tell staff at my care plan conference/Take this worksheet to my care plan conference.

• Share my thoughts with my family or friends and have them help me talk to staff at my care plan conference.

• Speak with the social services director.

• Speak up at a resident council meeting.

• Speak with the administrator and/or director of nursing.

• Ask the ombudsman to help me talk with staff.

• I can …

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6. **What do you need so that you can tell staff what you like about your care and your daily life here and what changes would make things even better?**

**Examples:** I need …

- The opportunity to talk with members of the administration and staff that can make decisions about the changes I’d like to see.

- Administration and staff that are supportive and encourage me to tell them what could be better.

- The feeling that my concerns/recommendations are welcomed and will be considered.

- Administration and staff that will make changes in an appropriate amount of time, and explain why when they can’t.

- I need …
FAMILY/FRIEND WORKSHEET

Goal #2: Consistent Assignment

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

- Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on consistent assignment.
- Write down your answers to the questions below.
- Take this worksheet with you to your relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your relative’s or friend’s care.
- Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for your relative or friend.

1. When your relative or friend gets a new aide for the very first time, what are the most important things you want the aide to know right away about his/her care?

Examples: I want my relative’s or friend’s aide to know right away that …

- Her bedside table with her phone and TV remote need to be within her reach at all times when she’s in her room.
- He always has to go to the bathroom right after he eats.
- It hurts when she moves and you need to be gentle with her.
- I want my relative’s or friend’s aide to know right away that …

2. If an aide is assigned to work with your relative or friend on a regular basis, what do you want the aide to know about him/her?

Examples: I want my relative’s or friend’s aide to know that …

- She likes a hot cup of coffee in bed when she first wakes up in the morning.
- She likes to take a nap before dinner.
- He wants to do as much for himself as he can even though it takes longer.
- I want my relative’s or friend’s aide to know that …
3. **How can you share this information with the resident’s aide?**

   **Examples:** I can …
   - Talk with my relative’s or friend’s aide.
   - Ask that the information be put onto the aide’s assignment sheet for my relative or friend or into a bedside care plan.
   - I can …

4. **What can YOU do to help build a good relationship between your relative or friend and his/her aide? What can YOU do to build a good relationship between you and your relative’s or friend’s aide?**

   **Examples:** I can …
   - Share with the aide the information I want the aide to know about my relative or friend.
   - Show the aide pictures of my relative or friend and his/her family.
   - Put together a scrapbook or journal about my relative or friend and keep it next to my relative’s or friend’s bed.
   - Ask the aide about him/herself. Ask about the aide’s family.
   - Ask for help nicely.
   - Treat the aide with respect.
   - Show appreciation for what the aide does for my relative or friend.
   - I can …

5. **What do you need so you can share information and build a good relationship with your relative’s or friend’s aide?**

   **Examples:** I need …
   - The aide to have the time to talk with me.
   - Participation by the aide in my relative’s or friend’s care plan conference.
   - Staff to read the information I have written up about the resident and placed in my relative’s or friend’s chart and/or by my relative’s or friend’s bedside.
   - I need …
Goal #3: Physical Restraints

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on restraints.

✓ Write down your answers to the questions below. (If you don’t have the answer, just skip the question.)

✓ Take this worksheet with you to your relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your relative’s or friend’s care.

✓ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for your relative or friend.

1. What should staff know about your relative or friend that would help in avoiding the use of restraints?

   • Describe your relative’s or friend’s daily routine at home before he or she moved here.
   • What did your relative or friend like to do at home before he or she moved here?
   • What kind of career did your relative or friend have?
   • What does your relative or friend really enjoy doing?
   • What’s your relative’s or friend’s favorite thing to do during the day?
   • When does your relative or friend like to get up in the morning? Go to bed at night?
   • When does your relative or friend like to take a shower or bath?
   • Does your relative or friend like to rest during the day? If so, at what times?
   • What’s your relative’s or friend’s favorite snack? Favorite drink?
   • What kind of chair is most comfortable for your relative or friend to sit in?
   • What is your relative’s or friend’s favorite place to sit in the nursing home?
   • What does your relative or friend do when he or she gets distressed or upset? How can staff tell that your relative or friend is distressed or upset? What helps make your relative or friend feel better when he or she is distressed?
• What helps your relative or friend sleep well at night?

• What are your relative or friend’s bowel and bladder patterns?

• What else do you think staff should know about your relative or friend that could help avoid or reduce restraint use?

2. How can YOU help staff do a good job of avoiding or reducing the use of restraints in your relative’s or friend’s care?

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your relative’s or friend’s needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give your relative or friend good care!

Examples: I can …

• Share this information with staff at a care plan conference and with my relative’s or friend’s aides.

• Participate in my relative’s or friend’s care plan conference.

• Work with staff to plan care that will strengthen my relative’s or friend’s muscles, if appropriate, and keep him/her as physically active as possible.

• Bring in my relative’s or friend’s favorite chair after checking with nursing home staff.

• Ask for the same nursing assistant to care for my relative or friend on most days and nights so they get to know each other.

• Ask staff to decrease the noise level at night if this is an issue for my relative’s or friend.

• If appropriate, bring in music (for instance a CD and headset) that calms my relative or friend when s/he gets distressed.

• I can …

3. What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?

Examples: I need …

• The date and time of my relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference.

• A list of my relative’s or friend’s medications and possible side effects if I have the legal authority to be given this information or if my relative’s or friend gives me permission.

• Information about when/where my relative or friend gets agitated/wanders/falls so I can help staff in trying to determine the cause.

• I need …
Goal #4: Pressure Ulcers

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

- Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on pressure ulcers.
- Write down your answers to the questions below. (If you don’t have the answer, just skip the question.)
- Take this worksheet with you to your relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your relative’s or friend’s care.
- Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for your relative or friend.

1. What should staff know about your relative or friend that would help in preventing pressure ulcers?
   - What does your relative or friend like to drink?
   - When does your relative or friend prefer to drink?
   - What kind of physical assistance or instructions does your relative or friend need to drink?
   - What are your relative’s or friend’s favorite foods?
   - What is your relative’s or friend’s favorite meal of the day?
   - What kind of chair is the most comfortable for your relative or friend to sit in?
   - What makes it easier for your relative or friend to move and turn in bed?
   - What makes it easier for your relative or friend to move around in a chair?
   - Is there anything that staff should know about turning your relative or friend in bed?
   - What are your relative or friend’s bowel and bladder patterns?
   - What else do you think staff should know about your relative or friend that could help prevent pressure ulcers?
2. **How can YOU help staff do a good job of preventing your relative or friend from getting pressure sores?**

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your relative's or friend's needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give your relative or friend good care!

**Examples:** I can …
- Share this information with staff at a care plan conference and with my relative’s or friend’s aides.
- Participate in my relative’s or friend’s care plan conference if he or she would like me there.
- Offer my relative or friend something to drink when I visit if the nurses tell me it’s alright to do so.
- Bring in my relative’s or friend’s favorite food if the nurses tell me it’s alright to do so.
- Tell staff when my relative or friend needs to go to the toilet or is sitting in wet clothing.
- Know my relative’s or friend’s turning schedule and help staff in remembering when it is time for him/her to be turned.
- Ask my relative’s or friend’s aide to check his/her skin for red spots daily if my relative or friend is at risk (more likely) to get pressure ulcers. (The nurse or aide can tell you if your relative or friend is at risk.)
- Report any red spots I see on my relative's or friend’s skin to his/her nurse.
- Let staff know if my relative or friend experiences constipation, diarrhea, loss of appetite, drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, dry or itchy skin, or thirst.
- Ask for the same nursing assistants to care for my relative or friend on most days and nights so they get to know each other.
- I can …

3. **What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?**

**Examples:** I need …
- The date and time of my relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference.
- A list of my relative’s or friend’s medications and possible side effects if I have the legal authority to be given this information or if my relative or friend gives me permission.
- Information about my relative’s or friend’s turning schedule.
- I need …
FAMILY/FRIEND WORKSHEET

Goal #5: Pain Management

HOW TO USE THIS WORKSHEET:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on pain.

✓ Write down your answers to the questions below. (If you don’t have the answer, just skip the question.)

✓ Take this worksheet with you to your relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about how this information can be applied to your relative’s or friend’s care.

✓ Share this information with the nursing assistants that care for your relative or friend.

1. What should staff know about your relative or friend that would help in relieving pain?
   - Where does your relative or friend feel pain?
   - When does your relative or friend usually feel pain?
   - How long does your relative or friend’s pain last?
   - What causes the pain?
   - How will staff know your relative or friend is in pain? Is your relative or friend willing and able to tell staff when he or she is in pain? If not, what signs are there that your relative or friend is in pain (for example, grimacing, agitation, moaning, etc.)?
   - What helps your relative or friend feel better when he or she is in pain?
     Examples: applying heat, applying cold, being moved or repositioned, giving pain medications.
   - If your relative or friend had to choose between feeling no pain, and being more alert and feeling some pain, what would he or she choose?
   - How will staff know that your relative’s or friend’s pain has been relieved?
   - What else should staff know about your relative or friend that may help them manage his/her pain?
2. **How can YOU help staff do a good job of relieving your relative or friend's pain?**

NOTE: this does NOT mean you should do the work of the certified nursing assistants and other staff! Think about what you can tell staff about your relative's or friend's needs/wants. Also think about how you can be an extra set of eyes and ears for the staff. These things will help staff give your relative or friend good care!

**Examples:** I can …

- Share this information with staff at a care plan conference and with my relative’s or friend's aides.
- Participate in my relative’s or friend’s care plan conference.
- Tell staff when my relative or friend is in pain.
- Provide information that may help staff identify signs that my relative or friend is in pain.
- Share with staff my observations about when my relative or friend appears to be in pain and what seems to relieve the pain.
- Let staff know if the approaches they are using are or are not working if my relative or friend can’t communicate that information.
- Tell staff about any possible negative effects I observe my relative or friend experiencing from pain medication, like constipation, loss of appetite, listlessness, dizziness, confusion, unsteadiness, and falls.
- Ask for the same nursing assistants to care for my relative or friend on most days and nights so they get to know each other.

3. **What do you need so you can do the things you listed in question #2?**

**Examples:** I need …

- The date and time of my relative's or friend’s next care plan conference.
- A list of my relative’s or friend’s medications and possible side effects if I have the legal authority to be given this information or if my relative or friend gives me permission.
- Knowledge of pain relief strategies being used for my relative or friend.
- Information about which staff person I should tell if my relative or friend is experiencing pain.

- I need …
Goal #7: Resident and Family Satisfaction

How to use this worksheet:

✓ Read the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet on assessing resident and family satisfaction.

✓ Write down your answers to the questions below.

✓ Take this worksheet with you to your relative’s or friend’s next care plan conference and share the information with staff. Talk about changes that could be made so that your relative’s or friend’s life at the nursing home and care are even better.

✓ Share this information with administration if appropriate.

1. How would you describe your relative’s or friend’s experience with care at this nursing home?

2. What changes would you like to see in your relative’s or friend’s care?

3. How would you describe your relative’s or friend’s experience with daily life in this nursing home?

4. What changes would you like to see in your relative’s or friend’s daily life at this nursing home?

5. What can YOU do to let staff know what you like about your relative’s or friend’s care and daily life here and what changes would make things even better?

Examples: I can …

• Tell my relative’s or friend’s aides and other staff.

• Share the information on this worksheet with staff at my relative’s or friend’s care plan conference.

• Speak with the social services director.

• Speak up at a family council meeting.

• Speak with the administrator and/or director of nursing.

• Ask the ombudsman to help me talk with staff.

• I can …

http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org
6. **What do you need so that you can tell staff what you like about your relative's or friend's experience with care and life here and what changes would make things even better?**

**Examples:** I need …

- The opportunity to talk with members of the administration and staff that can make decisions about the changes I'd like to see.
- Administration and staff that are supportive and encourage me to tell them what could be better.
- The feeling that my concerns/recommendations are welcomed and will be considered.
- Administration and staff that will make changes in an appropriate amount of time, and explain why when they can't.
- I need …
RESIDENT OR FAMILY COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Activity #1:
Learning about the Advancing Excellence Campaign

PURPOSE

In nursing homes that are participating in the campaign

✓ To educate residents or families and friends about the Advancing Excellence campaign.
✓ To inform residents or families and friends about how they as individuals and as a council can participate in the campaign.
✓ To prepare residents or families and friends - if interested - to discuss how they can help staff achieve the campaign goals as they relate to themselves, their relative or friend, or in general (Resident or Family Council Activity #2).

In nursing homes that are not participating in the campaign

✓ To educate residents or families and friends about the Advancing Excellence campaign.
✓ To discuss how residents or families and friends might encourage the nursing home to join the campaign.
✓ To inform residents or families and friends about how they can participate in the campaign even if their nursing home does not.

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: One hour.

I. IF THE NURSING HOME IS PARTICIPATING IN THE CAMPAIGN

Participants

✓ Residents or families and friends
✓ Advancing Excellence (AE) presenter: Could be any of the following:
  • Ombudsman
  • Member of a citizen advocacy group
  • Member of the LANE
  • Concerned member of the community who has joined the campaign
  • Nursing home administrator or staff member
  • Council president or other interested resident or family member/friend
✓ Nursing home administrator or designee if he or she is not making the presentation (with consent from council)
✓ Council designated staff person if desired by the council
Materials
✓ Flyer promoting the Advancing Excellence council presentation
✓ Advancing Excellence Council PowerPoint presentation
✓ Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign
✓ Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals
✓ Resident Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7; or Family/Friend Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7;
✓ Flyer about resident council involvement with Advancing Excellence or Flyer about family
council involvement with Advancing Excellence

✓ Consumer Resource List
✓ Advancing Excellence sign-up cards
✓ Flip chart and markers

Directions
Note: the directions begin at the point where the council has agreed to have the AE presenter speak at a council meeting.

Step 1:
✓ The AE presenter seeks council permission to invite the administrator to the meeting to talk about the campaign (goals, targets, what steps are being taken).

✓ The AE presenter invites the administrator. If neither the administrator nor his/her designee plans to attend the session, the AE presenter asks what goals the nursing home has selected.

✓ Residents or families and friends are informed about the presentation and invited to attend. A flyer promoting the Advancing Excellence council presentation is given to each resident and if possible, mailed to all family members and friends. The flyer is posted on the council bulletin board (if there is one) and throughout the nursing home. If possible, reminder calls are made to families and friends the day before, and residents are reminded and encouraged to attend the day of the meeting.

✓ Packets for the presentation are prepared in advance. The packet should include:

  • Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign
  • Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals
  • Resident Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7; or Family/Friend Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7;
  • Flyer about resident council involvement with Advancing Excellence or Flyer about family
council involvement with Advancing Excellence
  • Consumer Resource List
  • Advancing Excellence sign-up cards

Step 2:
✓ Packets are distributed.

✓ The AE presenter conducts the presentation using the Advancing Excellence PowerPoint Presentation for Resident and Family Councils (slides #1 - #27) and accompanying speaker comments and notes.
✓ The AE presenter asks the administrator (if present) to discuss the campaign and talk about the goals that have been selected. Residents or families and friends are given the opportunity to ask questions and dialog with the administrator.

**Step 3:**

✓ The AE presenter asks residents or families and friends if they would like to:

- Learn more about the goals selected by the nursing home; and
- Discuss how they could participate in the campaign by helping staff to reach the goals as they relate to themselves, their relative or friend, and in general.

**If yes,** the AE presenter:

- Asks which of the nursing home’s goals council members would like to discuss first. It is best to talk about only one goal at a meeting.
- Asks when the council would like to have the discussion.
- Distributes *Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals and Resident Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7,* or *Family/Friend Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7,* to help residents or families and friends prepare for the discussion.

**If no,** the AE presenter proceeds to Step 4.

**Step 4:**

✓ The AE presenter ends the session, gives residents or families and friends a chance to complete sign-up cards and ask questions (show slide #30 as background). The AE presenter collects the cards and enters them into the computer or submits them to the LANE to be entered into the computer.

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**II. IF THE NURSING HOME IS NOT PARTICIPATING IN THE CAMPAIGN**

**Participants**

✓ Residents or families and friends

✓ Advancing Excellence (AE) presenter: Could be any of the following:

- Ombudsman
- Member of a citizen advocacy group
- Member of the LANE
- Concerned member of the community who has joined the campaign
- Council president or other interested resident or family member/friend

**Materials**

✓ *Flyer promoting the Advancing Excellence council presentation*

✓ *Advancing Excellence Council PowerPoint presentation*

✓ *Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign*

✓ *Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals*
Directions

Note: Directions begin at the point where the council has agreed to have the AE presenter speak at a council meeting.

Step 1:

- Residents or families and friends are informed about the presentation and invited to attend. A flyer promoting the Advancing Excellence council presentation is given to each resident and if possible, mailed to all family members and friends. The flyer is posted on the council bulletin board (if there is one) and throughout the nursing home. If possible, reminder calls are made to families and friends the day before, and residents are reminded and encouraged to attend the day of the meeting.

- Packets for the presentation are prepared in advance. The packet should include:
  - Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign
  - Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals
  - Resident Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7; or Family/Friend Worksheets for Goals #2 - #5; #7;
  - Consumer Resource List
  - Advancing Excellence sign-up cards

Step 2:

- Packets are distributed.

- The AE presenter conducts the presentation using the Advancing Excellence PowerPoint Presentation for Resident and Family Councils (slides #1-27) and accompanying speaker comments and notes.

Step 3:

- The AE presenter then shows slide #28 from the above presentation.

- For slide #29: The AE presenter asks residents or families and friends if they would like to talk about how they could encourage the nursing home to join the campaign.

  If yes, the AE presenter facilitates a short discussion and lists council members’ ideas on the flip chart. The AE presenter helps residents or families and friends reach consensus on the approach to take and establish action steps, which might include inviting the administrator to the next council meeting or writing a letter to the administrator. The council may wish to use or modify the written request to the administrator from the council to join the campaign.

  If no, the AE presenter proceeds to Step 4.
Step 4:
The AE presenter finishes the PowerPoint presentation, ends the session, gives residents or families and friends a chance to complete sign-up cards and ask questions (show slide #30 as background). The AE presenter collects the cards and enters them into the computer or submits them to the LANE to be entered into the computer.
Activity #2: Helping to Achieve Excellence

PURPOSE

✓ To give residents or families and friends the opportunity to learn more about the campaign goals selected by the nursing home.
✓ To help residents and families and friends improve their own or their relative’s or friend’s care.
✓ To lead a discussion about how residents or family members and friends can help staff provide quality care as it relates to campaign goals.
✓ To communicate resident or family and friend experiences/ideas/needs related to the goals and achieving them to administration (if desired by the council).

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: One hour.

PARTICIPANTS

✓ Residents or families and friends
✓ Advancing Excellence (AE) Discussion Leader (if possible, this should be the same person who served as AE presenter). Could be any of the following:
  • Ombudsman
  • Member of a citizen advocacy group
  • Member of the LANE
  • Concerned member of the community who has joined the campaign
  • Nursing home staff member (with council permission)
✓ Council designated staff person according to usual council procedure

MATERIALS

✓ Flyer to promote resident/family council Advancing Excellence discussion session
✓ Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets for the campaign goals selected for the discussion session
✓ Resident Worksheets or Family/Friend Worksheets for goals selected for the discussion session
✓ Discussion Leader Instructions for goals selected for the discussion session
✓ Consumer Resource List
✓ Advancing Excellence sign-up cards
✓ Microphone for residents if possible
✓ Flip chart and markers
DIRECTIONS

Step 1:

- The AE discussion leader asks the council president what goal residents or families and friends would like to discuss at the upcoming meeting. It is best to cover only one goal during a session. The AE discussion leader and the council president determine how the discussion will be conducted.

- The council and the nursing home inform residents or families and friends about the session and promote the event. Suggestions for getting the word out include using the flyer to promote resident/family council Advancing Excellence discussion session and distributing it to each resident; mailing it to family members and friends; and posting it throughout the nursing home and on the council bulletin board (if there is one). If possible, reminder calls are made to families and friends the day before, and residents are reminded and encouraged to attend the day of the meeting.

- Packets for the discussion session are prepared. The packet includes:
  - Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets for the campaign goals selected for the discussion session
  - Resident Worksheets or Family/Friend Worksheets for goals selected for the discussion session
  - Consumer Resource List
  - Advancing Excellence sign-up cards

Step 2:

- Packets are distributed.

- The AE discussion leader guides residents or families and friends in discussion by following the Discussion Leader Instructions and using the Resident Worksheets or Family/Friend Worksheets for the goal(s) to be covered in this activity.

Step 3:

- The AE discussion leader shares with the council some ideas for establishing ongoing communication with the nursing home around the goal(s), including:
  - Monitoring progress on the goal(s) by asking for a progress report quarterly.
  - Inviting nursing home administration/staff to the council meeting on a regular basis to discuss campaign results, hear resident or family and friend feedback, and dialog.

Step 4:

The AE discussion leader:

- Thanks residents or families and friends for their participation.
- Indicates his/her availability to hold additional sessions on the other AE goals.
- Gives residents or families and friends who have not done so a chance to fill out Advancing Excellence sign-up cards. The completed cards are entered into the computer or submitted to the LANE to be entered into the computer.
- Ends the session.
Sample Article discussing the campaign for use in a resident or family council newsletter

[Cut or copy and paste onto letterhead or plain paper]

[Insert name of nursing home] is participating in an exciting national campaign called “Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes.” The purpose of this campaign is to improve the quality of life and care in nursing homes throughout the United States.

The Advancing Excellence campaign is a partnership between numerous organizations and individuals that started in 2006. Campaign participants include consumers (residents, their family members and friends, long-term care ombudsmen, citizen advocates, and other concerned members of the community); nursing home providers; nursing home staff; health care practitioners and professionals; quality improvement experts; state and federal agencies; and foundations. At the national level the campaign is guided by a steering committee. Local Area Networks of Excellence - LANES – are responsible for carrying out the campaign at the state level.

Nursing homes join the campaign voluntarily. When they enroll, they agree to work on at least three of eight goals. Nursing homes are able to receive assistance and guidance from quality experts in reaching their targeted goals.

The eight goals are:
1. Increasing Staff Retention
2. Improving consistent assignment of nursing home staff, so that residents regularly receive care from the same caregivers
3. Reducing the use of daily physical restraints
4. Reducing high risk pressure ulcers
5. Improving pain management for nursing home residents
6. Promoting Advance Care Planning
7. Assessing resident and family satisfaction
8. Assessing staff satisfaction

Results so far show that nursing homes that participate in Advancing Excellence have experienced faster improvements in the campaign’s goals of reducing the prevalence of pressure ulcers, reducing the use of physical restraints, and improving pain management for nursing home residents.

[Insert name of nursing home] has chosen these three goals to work on: [insert the goals].

[Insert name of nursing home administrator] reports that [insert, if possible, a statement from the administrator on what progress has been made].

The [choose one: Resident or Family] council thanks [insert name of nursing home] for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign. As a council we will work to partner with administration and staff to help reach these important goals.
Each of you can also participate in the Advancing Excellence campaign. You can do that in a number of ways:

- Learn more about the campaign and the eight goals.
- Sign up as a member of the campaign!
- Apply the information about the goals to your own or your relative’s or friend’s care, if appropriate.
- Use special resources designed just for this purpose.
- Tell others about Advancing Excellence and encourage them to join too!

You can get campaign information and enroll by going to the Advancing Excellence Web site at www.nhqualitycampaign.org and clicking on “For Consumers.” If you don’t have computer access, contact our state’s LANE convener, [insert name] at [insert contact information].

SIGNING UP FOR ADVANCING EXCELLENCE SENDS A MESSAGE THAT YOU CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF THIS NURSING HOME AND NURSING HOMES ACROSS THE COUNTRY!
Dear Nursing Home Administrator:

We have learned about an exciting national effort to improve the quality of nursing home care called the “Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes campaign.” The campaign focuses on eight goals that were chosen because improvements in these areas will be able to improve resident care and quality of life. You can learn more about the campaign on its website at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org).

Almost one-half of all nursing homes in the country have signed on to be part of this campaign. Data collected during the first 18 months of the campaign show that participating nursing homes are making faster improvement toward clinical goals than homes that don’t register.

We believe that Advancing Excellence is a way to make [insert name of your nursing home] an even better place for nursing home residents to live, families and friends to visit, and staff to work. For that reason, we urge you to enroll [insert name of your nursing home] in this campaign.

Please let us know by our next meeting whether [insert name of your nursing home] will be joining the campaign. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of your nursing home]
Why nursing home resident councils should get involved in Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes (A National Campaign to Improve Quality of Life for Residents and Staff)

Advancing Excellence is the first quality initiative that recognizes having nursing home residents, family members and friends as participants is key to quality improvement efforts in nursing homes.

EXPECT EXCELLENCE!
You should EXPECT services that provide quality of life and care to meet your individual needs.
Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national coalition-based campaign that:

- Promotes excellence in caregiving
- Acknowledges the critical role staff have in providing care
- Monitors key indicators of care
- Participating nursing homes will work on at least three of eight goals:
  - Increase staff retention
  - Improve consistent assignment of staff so residents receive care from the same caregivers
  - Reduce use of physical restraints
  - Reduce pressure ulcers
  - Improve pain management
  - Promote Advance Care Planning
  - Assess resident/family satisfaction
  - Assess staff satisfaction

EXPECT EXCELLENCE!
As you plan your next resident council meeting, consider the following:

- Would the council like to talk with nursing home staff about what good quality means?
- Is your nursing home participating in Advancing Excellence?
- If the nursing home has signed onto the campaign, what goals were selected and what steps are being taken to improve quality?
- What is the resident council’s role in helping the nursing home achieve their goals?
- Does the nursing home routinely seek input from the resident council regarding quality? How could the council best provide that input?

Every member of the council is encouraged to visit the Advancing Excellence Web site at http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/ and enroll in the campaign as a consumer to learn more and join other residents who EXPECT EXCELLENCE!

For more information or assistance with a resident council, contact:
[Insert name/contact information for your citizen advocacy group or ombudsman program]
**Why nursing home family councils should get involved in Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes**

*_(A National Campaign to Improve Quality of Life for Residents and Staff)_*

*Advancing Excellence is the first quality initiative that recognizes having nursing home residents, family members and friends as participants is key to quality improvement efforts in nursing homes.*

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**EXPECT EXCELLENCE!**

You should EXPECT services that provide quality of life and care to meet your individual needs. Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national coalition-based campaign that:

- Promotes excellence in caregiving
- Acknowledges the critical role staff have in providing care
- Monitors key indicators of care
- Participating nursing homes will work on at least three of eight goals:
  - Increase staff retention
  - Improve consistent assignment of staff so residents receive care from the same caregivers
  - Reduce use of physical restraints
  - Reduce pressure ulcers
  - Improve pain management
  - Promote Advance Care Planning
  - Increase resident/family satisfaction
  - Increase staff satisfaction

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**EXPECT EXCELLENCE!**

As you plan your next resident council meeting, consider the following:

- Would the council like to talk with nursing home staff about what good quality means?
- Is your nursing home participating in Advancing Excellence?
- If the nursing home has signed onto the campaign, what goals were selected and what steps are being taken to improve quality?
- What is the resident council’s role in helping the nursing home achieve their goals?
- Does the nursing home routinely seek input from the resident council regarding quality? How could the council best provide that input?

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Every member of the council is encouraged to visit the Advancing Excellence Web site at [http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/) and enroll in the campaign as a consumer to learn more and join other residents who EXPECT EXCELLENCE!

For more information or assistance with a resident council, contact:

[Insert name/contact information for your citizen advocacy group or ombudsman program]
Sample letter to the resident or family council president from the ombudsman or citizen advocacy group about availability to present an educational session and lead discussions about the campaign.

[Cut or copy and paste onto stationery]

Dear [choose one: Resident or Family] Council President:

Have you heard about the Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes campaign - an exciting national campaign to improve the quality of care and quality of life for nursing homes residents? Do you want to learn what the campaign is doing and how your nursing home and your council can help improve nursing home care?

I am writing to ask you for the opportunity to talk to your council about Advancing Excellence. Never before has there been this type of nationwide effort to improve care by having nursing homes set and then work to achieve real and measurable goals. Campaign goals related to care include reducing pressure ulcers, reducing the use of physical restraints, and improving pain management. Other goals involve finding ways to decrease staff turnover and to assign the same staff to care for residents most of the time. All of these goals can make a huge difference for residents, their families and friends, and staff!

I have enclosed a fact sheet that describes the campaign in more detail.

I am available to make a presentation about Advancing Excellence to your council so your members can learn more about the campaign, its goals and how to join. I am also available to help council members discuss how the campaign goals can be applied to residents’ care and how [choose one: residents or families and friends] can partner with the nursing home to reach the goals.

To make arrangements for this presentation or discussion, just call me at [insert phone number]. I hope to hear from you soon!

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]
[Insert name of your ombudsman program or citizen advocacy group]
Resident or Family Council Activity #2:
Helping to Achieve Excellence

Goals #2
Increase Use of Consistent Assignment

I. Starting the activity

✓ Explain that the purpose of this activity is to:
  • Give residents or families and friends the opportunity to learn more about the campaign goal to increase the use of consistent assignment selected by the nursing home.
  • Discuss residents’ or family members and friends’ experience with consistent assignment.
  • Discuss how residents or families and friends can help consistent assignment be successful in their own or their relative’s or friend’s care.
  • Communicate to administration the experience of residents or family members and friends with consistent assignment and their ideas about how they can help achieve this goal – if residents or families and friends wish to do so.

II. Education

✓ Present a very quick overview of the campaign using the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign.

✓ Tell residents or families and friends what three goals the nursing home has selected and that this discussion will focus on consistent assignment.

✓ Provide some brief education about this goal using the “Consistent Assignment” fact sheet from the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals.

III. Discussion

✓ Go over ground rules for discussion.
  • Allow others to finish what they are saying without interruption.
  • Respect others and what they have to say.
  • The information shared in this room stays in this room (unless the group consents to it being shared).
  • Ask if anyone has any other rules they would like to add.
  • Ask if everyone is in agreement with these rules and agrees to follow them.

Part 1: Discussion of nursing home efforts to increase the use of consistent assignment

This discussion is based on consistent assignment being used in the nursing home. If this is not the case, facilitate a discussion about whether residents or families and friends would like to see the nursing home adopt consistent assignment. If so, ask if residents or families and friends want to communicate a request for consistent assignment to the nursing home administrator. Residents or families
and friends can use or adapt a letter to the nursing home administrator from the resident/family council requesting the adoption of consistent assignment.

- Assist residents in writing such a request if residents would like help.
- When working with families and friends, discuss who will write the request and submit it.

✓ Explain that the purpose of this discussion is to find out what residents or families and friends think of consistent assignment and how it is working in their nursing home.

✓ Discuss the questions below.
  - Read each question out loud.
  - After each question, ask residents or families and friends to share their answers if they would like to do so and if the group is not too large.
  - Write responses on the flip chart.

Questions about consistent assignment

- How is consistent assignment working in your nursing home? How often do you have or does your relative or friend have the same aide during the day and at night?
- What do you like about consistent assignment?
- What would make consistent assignment work even better in your nursing home?

Part 2: Discussion of Resident or Family Worksheet - Consistent Assignment

✓ Explain that the purpose of this part of the activity is to discuss how residents or family members and friends can help consistent assignment be successful in their own or their relative's or friend's care and what they need to do that.

✓ Discuss the questions on the [Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet - Consistent Assignment](#).
  - Make sure to read each question on the Resident Worksheet out loud for residents.
  - Go over some of the examples from the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for each of the questions.
  - Ask residents or families and friends to share their answers with the group if they would like to do so and if the group is not too large.
  - Write responses on the flip chart.

Part 3: Discussion of communication with nursing home administration about consistent assignment

✓ Explain that if residents or families choose to do so, the purpose of this part of the activity is to explore ways in which they can communicate their experiences and ideas to nursing home administration and dialog about how residents or families and friends, and nursing home administration and staff can work together to achieve the Advancing Excellence goal of consistent assignment.

✓ If residents or families and friends don’t wish to pursue this communication at this time, end the discussion part of the session.
If there is interest in such a conversation, tell residents or families and friends that you are going to start by laying out a couple of options for their consideration. Assist residents or families and friends in exploring the options, choosing one, and taking any immediate next steps.

Option 1

The council could invite the nursing home administrator (and anyone else the administrator recommends) to come to the next council meeting to talk about consistent assignment and what the nursing home is doing to adopt it. At the meeting residents or families and friends, and nursing home administration and staff could share ideas about how they can partner to achieve consistent assignment.

- If this option is chosen:
  - Ask residents or families and friends how they want to communicate the invitation to the nursing home administrator.
  - Discuss who will do it.

Option 2

This is a more formal approach that uses the system the council has already established for communication with nursing home administration. The council could identify agreed upon key points from its earlier discussion of the nursing home efforts to achieve consistent assignment (Part 1 above) and the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet (Part 2 above). It could then communicate those points by following its usual process for submitting feedback and suggestions to the nursing home.

- If this option is chosen:
  - Ask residents or families and friends if they would like to share the points they identified in the discussion about consistent assignment (Part 1 above) and questions #3, #4 and #5 on the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet with the nursing home administrator, stressing that no information would be provided to administration that identified in any way any individual resident or family member/friend. If council members want to proceed:
    - Identify which specific points from their responses to those questions they want to share.
    - Discuss and decide how the points will be stated.
    - Confirm the process the council will use to present its comments/input to the nursing home.

Option 3

Same as above, except the council decides to submit its feedback/input in the form of a letter to the nursing home administrator.

- If this option is chosen:
  - Follow the steps in Option 2 to help residents or families/friends arrive at agreement about what points to include and how to express them.
  - Explain that the council can use a sample “Dear Administrator” letter (below); modify the “Dear Administrator” letter; or write its own letter.
  - Help residents write the letter if they would like assistance. Ask who will be responsible for giving it to the administrator.
  - Have family members and friends decide who will write the letter and who will give it to the administrator.
Sample Dear Administrator Letter

Dear Administrator:
Thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign and adopting consistent assignment as one of the goals. The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council strongly supports the use of consistent assignment at [insert Name of nursing home].

We thought it would be helpful to you to know what our experience has been so far with consistent assignment and some of the things that we like about it.

Our experience: Fill in with responses from group discussion of Part 1, question #1, that residents or families and friends want communicated.

Things we like: Fill in with responses from group discussion of Part 1, question #2, that residents or families and friends agree to share.

The council wants to help [Name of Nursing Home] be successful in using consistent assignment. We have discussed steps that [choose one: residents or families and friends] can take to share information and build a good relationship with our aides. Some of those steps are:

Fill in with responses from group discussion of questions #3 & #4 of the Resident or Family Worksheet that residents or families want communicated.

To help us do these things, we need:
Fill in with points from group discussion of question #5 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet that residents or family members and friends all agree to share.

We request that [insert Name of Nursing Home] address these needs so we can help make consistent assignment a success.

We have also discussed a few points that might make consistent assignment work even better at [insert Name of nursing home]. Those points include:

Fill in with responses from group discussion of Part 1, question #3, that residents or families and friends want communicated.

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council greatly appreciates all that you and the staff are doing to put consistent assignment in place at [insert Name of nursing home]. We would like to invite you to our next council meeting to talk with you about our experiences and ideas and how we can work with you and staff to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert Name of nursing home]

Option 4

Ask residents and families what other suggestions they have for communicating and dialoging with nursing home administration about this goal.
DISCUSSION LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

Resident or Family Council Activity #2: Helping to Achieve Excellence

Goals #3 – #5
Reduce Use of Physical Restraints
Reduce Prevalence of Pressure Ulcers
Decrease Symptoms of Pain

SELECT ONE GOAL TO DISCUSS AT THIS SESSION.

I. Starting the activity

✓ Explain that the purpose of this activity is to:
  • Give residents or families and friends the opportunity to learn more about the campaign goal selected for this session.
  • Discuss how residents or families and friends can help staff do a good job of [choose one: reducing the use of physical restraints/reducing prevalence of pressure ulcers/decreasing symptoms of pain] in their own or their relative’s or friend’s care.
  • Discuss residents’ or families and friends’ experience with [choose one: pressure ulcers/physical restraints/pain].
  • Communicate to administration the experience of residents or family members and friends with [choose one: pressure ulcers/physical restraints/pain] and their ideas about what they and the nursing home can do to help achieve this goal if residents or families and friends wish to do so.

II. Education

✓ Present a very quick overview of the campaign using the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign.

✓ Tell residents or families and friends what three goals the nursing home has chosen and identify the goal you will be discussing in this session.

✓ Provide some brief education about the goal selected for this session using the appropriate fact sheet from the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals.

III. Discussion

✓ Go over ground rules for discussion:
  • Allow others to finish what they are saying without interruption.
  • Respect others and what they have to say.
✓ The information shared in this room stays in this room (unless the group consents to it being shared).
  • Ask if anyone has any other rules they would like to add.
  • Ask if everyone is in agreement with these rules and agrees to follow them.

Part 1: Discussion of Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for the selected goal

✓ Explain that the purpose of this part of the discussion is to identify ways residents or families and friends can help staff do a good job of [choose one: reducing the use of physical restraints/reducing prevalence of pressure ulcers/decreasing symptoms of pain] in their own or their relative’s/friend’s care.

✓ Discuss the questions on the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for the selected goal.
  • Make sure to read each question on the Resident Worksheet out loud for residents.
  • Go over some of the examples from the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for questions #2 and #3.
  • Ask residents or families and friends to share their answers with the group if they would like to do so and if the group is not too large.
  • Write responses on the flip chart.

✓ Talk about what residents or families and friends can do individually with the information on the Worksheets, such as sharing it with staff at a care plan conference.

Part 2: Discussion of nursing home efforts to achieve the goal

✓ Explain that the purpose of this discussion is to find out what residents or families and friends think of how the goal is being addressed and to identify any suggestions they might have.

✓ Ask the following questions and have participants share their answers if they are comfortable doing so. Write responses on the flip chart.

Questions for selected goal:
  • In general, how do you think the nursing home is doing in [choose one: preventing pressure ulcers/reducing physical restraints/improving pain management]? Tailor your questions to the goal selected for the discussion. For example, “Do you see a lot of residents with restraints?”
  • “Do you feel pain is being managed well?”
  • Do you know what changes the nursing home is making to [choose one: reduce the use of physical restraints/reduce prevalence of pressure ulcers/decrease symptoms of pain]?
  • How could staff do an even better job of [choose one: reducing the use of physical restraints/reducing prevalence of pressure ulcers/decreasing symptoms of pain]?

✓ If residents or families and friends are not aware of what the nursing home is doing to reach the goal, suggest that the council consider inviting the administrator and/or director of nursing to the next meeting to explain what steps are being taken.

Part 3: Discussion of communication with nursing home administration about the goal

✓ Explain that if residents or families and friends choose to do so, the purpose of this part of the activity is to explore ways in which they can communicate their experiences and ideas to nursing home administration and dialog about how residents or families and friends and nursing home administration/staff can work together on the Advancing Excellence goals being discussed.
If residents or families and friends don’t wish to pursue communication/dialog at this time, end the discussion part of the session.

If there is interest in such a dialog, tell residents or families and friends that you are going to start by laying out a couple of options for their consideration. Assist residents or families and friends in exploring the options, choosing one, and taking any immediate next steps.

Option 1

The council could invite the nursing home administrator (and anyone else the administrator recommends) to come to the next council meeting to talk about pressure ulcers, physical restraints, or pain management and what the nursing home is doing to reach its goal. At the meeting, residents or families and friends, and nursing home administration and staff, could share ideas for how they could partner to [choose one: prevent pressure ulcers/reduce the use of physical restraints/improve pain management].

If this option is chosen:
• Ask residents or families and friends how they want to communicate the invitation to the nursing home administrator.
• Discuss who will do it.

Option 2

This is a more formal approach that uses the system the council has already established for communication with nursing home administration. The council could identify agreed upon, key points from its earlier discussion of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet (Part 1 above) and nursing home efforts to achieve the goal (Part 2 above). It could then communicate those points by following its usual process for submitting feedback and suggestions to the nursing home.

If this option is chosen:
• Ask residents or families and friends if they would like to share the points they identified in questions #2 and #3 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet and question #3 of Part 2 above with the nursing home administrator, stressing that no information would be provided to administration that identified in any way any individual resident or family member/friend. If council members want to proceed:
  – Identify which specific points from their responses to those questions they want to share.
  – Discuss and decide how the points will be stated.
  – Confirm the process the council will use to present its comments/input to the nursing home.

Option 3

Same as above, except the council decides to submit its feedback/input in the form of a letter to the nursing home administrator.

If this option is chosen:
• Follow the steps in Option 2 to help residents or families and friends arrive at agreement about what points to include and how to express them.
• Explain that the council can use a sample “Dear Administrator” letter (next page); modify the “Dear Administrator” letter; or write its own letter.
  – Help residents write the letter if they would like assistance. Ask who will be responsible for giving it to the administrator.
  – Have family members and friends decide who will write the letter and who will give it to the administrator.
Sample Dear Administrator Letter

Dear Administrator:

Thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign and for choosing to [choose one: reduce the use of physical restraints/reduce prevalence of pressure ulcers/decrease symptoms of pain] as one of the goals.

The Resident/Family Council wants to help [insert name of nursing home] be successful in achieving this goal. We have discussed steps that [choose one: residents or families and friends can take to help. Some of those steps are:

*Fill in with responses from group discussion of Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet, question #2, that residents or families and friends agree to include.*

To help us do these things, we need:

*Fill in only those points from group discussion of Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet, question #3, which residents or families and friends want communicated.*

We request that [insert name of nursing home] address these needs so we can join staff in being partners for care.

We have also discussed a few points that might be helpful in reaching the goal. These include:

*Fill in with responses from group discussion of Part 2, question #3, which residents or families and friends wish to share.*

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council greatly appreciates all that you and the staff are doing to accomplish the goal of [choose one: preventing pressure ulcers/reducing physical restraints/improving pain management] at [insert name of nursing home]. We would like to invite you to our next council meeting to talk with you about our experiences and ideas and how we can work with you and staff to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of nursing home]

**Option 4**

Ask residents and families what other suggestions they have for communicating and dialoging with nursing home administration about this goal.
Resident or Family Council Activity #2: Helping to Achieve Excellence

Goal #7
Assessing Resident and Family Satisfaction

• Starting the activity
  ✓ Explain that the purpose of this activity is to:
    • Give residents or families and friends the opportunity to learn more about the campaign goal on resident and family satisfaction selected by the nursing home.
    • Discuss residents’ or family members and friends’ ideas about satisfaction surveys and their opinions about the quality of care and life at the nursing home.
    • Communicate these ideas and opinions to administration if residents or families and friends wish to do so.

• Education
  ✓ Present a very quick overview of the campaign using the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheet about the campaign.
  ✓ Tell residents or families and friends what three goals the nursing home has selected and that this discussion will focus on resident and family satisfaction.
  ✓ Provide some brief education about this goal using the “Assessing Resident and Family Satisfaction” fact sheet from the Advancing Excellence consumer fact sheets on the campaign goals.
    • Explain that the purpose of measuring resident and family satisfaction is to identify areas in the nursing home that need improvement.

• Discussion
  If there are many residents or families and friends and a lot of discussion, it is best to divide the discussion into two separate sessions: one to focus on satisfaction surveys and the second to talk about individual resident or family satisfaction.
  ✓ Go over ground rules for discussion.
    • Allow others to finish what they are saying without interruption.
    • Respect others and what they have to say.
    • The information shared in this room stays in this room (unless the group consents to it being shared).
    • Ask if anyone has any other rules they would like to add.
    • Ask if everyone is in agreement with these rules and agrees to follow them.
Part 1: Discussion of satisfaction surveys

✓ Explain that the purpose of this discussion is to get residents’ or families and friends’ thoughts about surveys that evaluate how satisfied residents or family members and friends are with care and life at the nursing home.

✓ Make copies of the questions outlined below to hand out to residents or families and friends.

✓ Discuss the questions below.
  - Read each question out loud for residents.
  - After each question, ask residents or family members and friends to share their answers if they would like to do so and if the group is not too large.
  - Write responses on the flip chart.

Questions about satisfaction surveys

1. Has anyone ever been asked to fill out a satisfaction survey about the care and life here at this nursing home – by filling out a form or by someone asking you questions?

If residents or families and friends have completed a satisfaction survey, ask questions #2-10.

2. Were the questions easy to understand?
3. Did you feel comfortable and safe answering the questions?
   - If yes: What was done to make you feel comfortable and safe?
   - If no: What could be done to make you feel comfortable and safe?
4. What did you think about the questions you were asked?
5. Were the questions about things that are important to you?
   - If not, what things would you have liked to have been asked about?
6. Do you know what the results of the satisfaction survey were?
7. Would you like to know the results?
8. What would be the best way for you to learn about the results?
9. When the results of the satisfaction survey come back, would you like a chance to make suggestions about what changes could be made or how those changes could be made?
   - If yes, what would be the best way for you to make those suggestions?
10. Do you know what changes were made as a result of the satisfaction survey?
    - If not, would you like to know what changes were made?
11. What would be the best way for you to learn about any changes that have been made?
12. What would make the satisfaction survey process better?

If residents or families and friends have not completed a satisfaction survey, ask questions #11-16.

11. Would you like a chance to rate the nursing home on how well it’s doing?
12. What would make you feel comfortable and safe in answering a survey?
13. What kinds of questions do you think should be asked?
14. After you have done the survey, would you like to know the results?
   • What would be the best way for you to learn about the results?

15. When the results of the satisfaction survey come back, would you like a chance to make suggestions about what changes could be made or how those changes could be made?
   • If yes, what would be the best way for you to make those suggestions?

16. Would you want to know what changes are made as a result of the satisfaction survey?
   • What would be the best way for you to learn about any changes that are made?

Part 2: Discussion of communication with nursing home administration about satisfaction surveys

✓ Explain that if residents or families and friends choose to do so, the purpose of this part of the activity is to explore ways in which they can communicate their experiences and ideas about satisfaction surveys to nursing home administration and dialog about how residents or families and friends and nursing home administration/staff can work together on this Advancing Excellence goal.

✓ If residents or families and friends don’t wish to pursue this communication at this time, end the discussion part of the session.

✓ If there is interest in such a conversation, tell residents or families and friends that you are going to start by laying out a couple of options for their consideration. Assist residents or families and friends in exploring the options, choosing one and taking any immediate next steps.

Option 1

The council could invite the nursing home administrator (and anyone else the administrator recommends) to come to the next council meeting to talk about measuring satisfaction and what the nursing home is doing with this goal. At the meeting, residents or families and friends, and nursing home administration and staff, could share ideas about how they could partner to create a way to assess satisfaction.

If this option is chosen:
   • Ask residents or families and friends how they want to communicate the invitation to the nursing home administrator.
   • Discuss who will do it.

Option 2

This is a more formal approach that uses the system the council has already established for communication with nursing home administration. The council could identify agreed upon, key points from its earlier discussion in Part 1. It could then communicate those points by following its usual process for submitting feedback and suggestions to the nursing home.

If this option is chosen:
   • Ask residents or families and friends which specific points in questions #2 - #10 or #11 - #16 they want to share, stressing that no information would be provided to administration that identified in any way any individual resident or family member/friend.
   • Discuss and decide how the points will be stated.
   • Confirm the process the council will use to present its comments/input to the nursing home.
**Option 3**

Same as above, except the council decides to submit its feedback/input in the form of a letter to the nursing home administrator.

If this option is chosen:
- Follow the steps in Option 2 to help residents or families and friends arrive at agreement about what points to include and how to express them.
- Explain that the council can use a sample “Dear Administrator” letter (below); modify the “Dear Administrator” letter; or write its own letter.
- Help residents write the letter if they would like assistance. Ask who will be responsible for giving it to the administrator.
- Have family members and friends decide who will write the letter and who will give it to the administrator.

**Sample Dear Administrator Letter:**

Dear Administrator:

Thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence Campaign and for working to assess resident and family satisfaction as one of the goals!

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council strongly supports gathering information from residents, families and residents’ friends about their experience with care and quality of life and using that information to make improvements.

We discussed this topic at our council meeting on [insert date] and would like to share the following with you:

*Fill in with responses from group discussion of questions #2-#10 or #11-#16 in Part 1 that residents or families and friends agree to share.*

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council greatly appreciates all that you and the staff are doing to accomplish the goal of measuring resident and family satisfaction at [insert name of nursing home]. We would like to invite you to our next council meeting to talk with you about our experiences and ideas and how we can work with you and staff to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of nursing home]

**Option 4**

Ask residents or families and friends what other suggestions they have for communicating and dialoging with nursing home administration about this goal.
Part 3: Discussion of Resident or Family Worksheet - Resident and Family Satisfaction

✔ Explain that the purpose of this part of the activity is to discuss residents' or family members and friends' opinions about the quality of care and life at their nursing home.

✔ Discuss the questions on the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for Resident and Family Satisfaction.
  • Make sure to read each question on the Resident Worksheet out loud for residents.
  • Go over some of the examples from the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet for questions #5 and #6.
  • Ask residents or families and friends to share their answers with the group if they would like to do so and if the group is not too large.
  • Write responses on the flip chart.

Part 4: Discussion of communication with nursing home administration about satisfaction

✔ Explain that the purpose of this part of the activity is to share residents' or family members and friends' opinions about the quality of care and life at their nursing home with nursing home administration and staff - if residents or families wish to do so.

✔ Present the four options for communicating with nursing home administration that are described in Part 2 of this section:

Option 1: Inviting the nursing home administrator to the next meeting for discussion and dialog.

Option 2: Using the established council system to communicate to the nursing home administrator any of the points identified in questions #1 - #6 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet.

Option 3: Writing a letter to the nursing home administrator to communicate any of the points identified in questions #1-#6 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet. The “Dear Administrator” letter below can be used or modified.

Option 4: Asking residents or families and friends for their ideas about communicating and dialoging with nursing home administration about this goal.

Sample Dear Administrator Letter

Dear Administrator:
Thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign and for working to assess resident and family satisfaction as one of the goals! We greatly appreciate your interest in quality improvement.

At a recent council meeting we discussed different aspects of care and life at [insert Name of nursing home]. Since we know that you are working to make life here better for everyone, we thought it might be helpful for you to have the following information:

Fill in with the responses from group discussion of questions #1 - #4 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet that residents or families and friends want shared.

In addition, we have discussed ways in which individual [choose one: residents or families and friends] can let staff know what they like about care and life at [insert name of nursing home] and what improvements might make things even better. Some of those ways are:
Fill in with the responses from question #5 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet that residents or families and friends want to communicate.

To help us do these things, we need:

Fill in with the responses from group discussion of question #6 of the Resident or Family/Friend Worksheet that residents or families and friends agree to share.

We request that [insert name of nursing home] address these needs so we can join staff in enhancing quality of life and quality of care.

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council greatly appreciates all that you and the staff are doing to increase resident and family satisfaction at [insert name of nursing home]. We would like to invite you to our next council meeting to talk with you about our experiences and ideas and how we can work with you and staff to make [insert name of nursing home] an even better place to live, work and visit.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of nursing home]
Sample “Letter to the Editor” about the campaign

[Cut or copy and paste onto your stationery or plain paper]

[Insert name of newspaper]:

The quality of our community’s nursing homes affects – or will affect – all of us, and now there is positive action that each of us can take to promote quality care.

The Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes campaign is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and quality of life of our nation’s nursing home residents. This is the first time such a large collaborative initiative has been undertaken to establish and then work to achieve real and measurable goals. Campaign goals include reducing staff turnover and assigning the same staff to care for residents most of the time to build relationships and promote consistency, reducing physical restraints, reducing pressure ulcers, improving pain management, promoting Advance Care Planning, assessing resident and family satisfaction, and assessing staff satisfaction. These goals have been chosen because they represent areas where improvements in care are greatly needed and because they will help bring about fundamental organizational changes that will impact care.

Joining this campaign is an easy and important step that everyone can take. Consumers that enroll in the campaign send the message that they want and expect excellence in our area nursing homes. In addition to signing up, consumers can encourage nursing homes in our community to participate in Advancing Excellence. To-date the following nursing homes in our community have joined the campaign: [insert names of participating nursing homes in your community].

To get a listing, go to: http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=NH_list. These nursing homes are to be commended for their efforts, while we should all urge homes that have not yet come on board to do so.

To enroll in the campaign and learn more about what you can do to help achieve nursing home excellence, go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org.

If not us, then who?

[Insert your name]
[Insert your address]
[Insert your phone number]
Sample article about the campaign for use in a community newspaper or agency newsletter

[Cut or copy and paste onto letterhead or plain paper]

A new campaign is underway in [insert name of city] and around the country to improve the quality of care and quality of life for nursing home residents. Called “Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes,” the campaign pursues excellence by focusing on resident choice, care outcomes, and staffing.

The Advancing Excellence campaign is a partnership between numerous organizations and individuals that started in 2006. Campaign participants include consumers (residents, their family members and friends, long-term care ombudsmen, citizen advocates, and other concerned members of the community); nursing home providers; nursing home staff; health care practitioners and professionals; quality improvement experts; state and federal agencies; and foundations. At the national level the campaign is guided by a steering committee. Local Area Networks of Excellence - LANES – are responsible for carrying out the campaign at the state level.

Nursing homes join the campaign voluntarily. When they enroll, they agree to work on at least three of eight goals. Nursing homes are able to receive assistance and guidance from quality experts in reaching their targeted goals.

The eight goals are:
1. Increasing staff retention
2. Improving consistent assignment of nursing home staff, so that residents regularly receive care from the same caregivers
3. Reducing the use of daily physical restraints
4. Reducing high risk pressure ulcers
5. Improving pain management nursing home residents
6. Promoting Advance Care Planning
7. Assessing resident and family satisfaction with the quality of care
8. Assessing staff satisfaction.

Results so far show that nursing homes that participate in Advancing Excellence have experienced faster improvements in the campaign’s goals of reducing the prevalence of pressure ulcers, reducing the use of physical restraints, and improving pain management for long term and short stay nursing home residents.

Nationally, almost 45% of nursing homes are enrolled in the campaign. In our community, the following nursing homes are participating: [insert names of participating nursing homes].

As members of this community, each of us has a stake in the quality of our area’s nursing homes. Here are just some of the ways in which you can be involved with the campaign and support quality:

- Learn about the campaign and its goals
- Enroll in the campaign
- Educate others about Advancing Excellence and ask them to join
- Write a letter to the editor about the campaign, its importance and how consumers can join
- Write letters to or meet with the nursing home administrators of homes that are not enrolled and urge them to join the campaign

http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org
➢ Become a volunteer in a nursing home in your community and talk with residents about the campaign
➢ Contact our state’s LANE convener and ask about ways you can get involved in the LANE and/or in campaign activities. You can reach the LANE convener, [insert name] at [insert contact information].

You can get information about the campaign and enroll by going to the campaign Web site at www.nhqualitycampaign.org and clicking on “For Consumers.” If you don’t have computer access, contact our state’s LANE convener.

Care matters and consumers count.

SIGNING UP FOR ADVANCING EXCELLENCE SENDS A MESSAGE THAT YOU CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF NURSING HOMES ACROSS THE COUNTRY!
Sample letter to a non-participating nursing home urging participation in the campaign

[Cut or copy and paste onto your stationery or plain paper]

Dear [insert name of nursing home administrator]

As a member of this community, I care deeply about the quality of nursing home care that my relatives, my friends or I may someday need. That's why I'm writing to urge [insert name of nursing home] to join the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign.

I am sure you are aware of this campaign, but you may not know that data collected during the first 18 months of the campaign show that participating nursing homes experienced faster improvements in the campaign's four clinical goals than their peers. Progress was made toward reducing the prevalence of pressure ulcers, reducing the use of physical restraints, and improving pain management for both long term and short stay nursing home residents.

Such progress, along with the fact that participating nursing homes receive state-of-the-art, evidence-based information and training materials to help achieve improvement, make a compelling case for joining the campaign.

To-date, [insert number] nursing homes in our community have enrolled in Advancing Excellence. In doing so, these homes have sent a message about their commitment to quality and their interest in making quality improvements in key areas - areas that really matter to consumers.

I hope that [insert name of nursing home] will also show its desire to improve quality by adding its name to the list of homes in our area that are participating in the Advancing Excellence campaign.

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]
[Insert your address]
[Insert your telephone number]
You should EXPECT services that provide quality of life and care to meet your individual needs or those of your relative or friend. Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes is a national campaign that promotes excellence in caregiving, acknowledges the critical role staff have in providing care, and monitors key indicators of care.

Participating nursing homes will work on at least three of eight goals:

- Increase staff retention
- Improve consistent assignment of staff so residents receive care from the same caregivers
- Reduce use of physical restraints
- Reduce pressure ulcers
- Improve pain management
- Promote Advance Care Planning
- Assess resident and family satisfaction
- Assess staff satisfaction

**EXPECT EXCELLENCE!**

Your voice matters! With your permission and a little information, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman will help you join the campaign! Simply complete the attached form or help the ombudsman complete it for you and tell us how you would like to **EXPECT EXCELLENCE!**

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**Yes!** I would like the Ombudsman to help me join the Advancing Excellence campaign as a participating consumer and I give the ombudsman my permission to enter my name on the website at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org) and to occasionally send me information and updates so I can continue to **EXPECT EXCELLENCE!**

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**Signature**

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**First Name** ____________________________  **Last Name** ____________________________

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**Address**

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**City of Residence** ____________________  **State** ___________  **Zip** ___________

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**Email** ____________________________  **Phone (optional)** ____________________________
Which of the following best describes you (check all that apply)?

- Current or past nursing home resident
- Family member or friend of past or current nursing home resident
- Legal representative for nursing home resident
- Current or past nursing home employee
- Concerned citizen
- Clinician
- Consumer advocate
- Nursing home volunteer
- Other: ____________________________________________________________________

I want to help the campaign in the following ways (check all that apply):

- Ask my local nursing home(s) to join the campaign
- Engage in a dialogue with facility staff and the medical director about this campaign
- Encourage discussion about the campaign in resident and family councils
- Learn about the eight topic areas and share this information with others
- Examine state specific data on the campaign website at www.nhqualitycampaign.org
- Talk about the importance of quality of life & quality of care with my friends, family, & colleagues
- Encourage families and friends of residents to work with facility staff so that the staff can truly know the resident, his/her history, likes and dislikes, goals, etc.

- Other: ____________________________________________________________________

Comments:
Dear [choose one: Resident or Family] Council President,

Today I am writing to tell you about an exciting opportunity for you, the residents, their families and friends, and staff at your nursing home. It's the Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes campaign.

This is a voluntary national campaign to improve care and life for nursing home residents. The campaign monitors key indicators of quality, promotes excellence in caregiving for nursing home residents and recognizes the very important role of nursing home staff in providing care.

When your nursing home signs up, they will agree to work on at least three of the following eight measurable goals:

1. Increasing staff retention
2. Improving consistent assignment of nursing home staff, so that residents regularly receive care from the same caregivers
3. Reducing the use of daily physical restraints
4. Reducing high risk pressure ulcers
5. Improving pain management
6. Promoting Advance Care Planning
7. Assessing resident and family satisfaction
8. Assessing staff satisfaction

Please talk with your administrator today and ask him or her to visit the Advancing Excellence Web site at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org) with you and to sign on to the campaign. If you have additional questions about the campaign, please contact me at [insert your contact information].

Sincerely,
[Insert your name]
[Choose one: State or Local] Long-Term Care Ombudsman

cc: Administrator
Medical Director
Director of Nursing
Dear [insert name]:

Welcome to the Advancing Excellence campaign and thank you for joining this important effort to improve care and life for our country’s nursing home residents! By signing on you have already sent a message that consumers in the United States care about the quality of nursing homes.

As a member of the campaign, you will receive the Advancing Excellence newsletter, *The Campaign Advance*, and be able to participate in free national webinars. In addition, we want to make sure you are aware of the many resources that are available for consumers. On the Advancing Excellence Web site you will find consumer fact sheets about the campaign and the campaign goals. To access these fact sheets, go to: [http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=consumerActionPlan](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=consumerActionPlan).

At the state level, campaign activities are coordinated by the Local Area Network of Excellence, known as the LANE. In [insert name of state], the LANE is made up of [insert list of participating groups]. [Insert a statement about any LANE-sponsored activities available to consumers who join].

Because you care about nursing home excellence, we invite you to help us in promoting the Advancing Excellence campaign. There are many ways that you can become involved. Some of these activities are as simple as telling your friends and family about the campaign and encouraging them to sign on. To find out how you can participate and get the tools to assist you, you can go to the Consumer Guide that is available on the Advancing Excellence Web site. We also encourage you to contact us at: [insert LANE contact information].

Once again, thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign, and we look forward to working with you to achieve excellence!

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]

Member, [insert name of your state] LANE
Dear [insert name]:

Welcome to the Advancing Excellence campaign and thank you for joining this important effort to improve care and life for our country’s nursing home residents! By signing on you have already sent a message that consumers in the United States care about the quality of nursing homes.

As a member of the campaign, you will receive the Advancing Excellence newsletter, *The Campaign Advance*, and be able to participate in free national webinars. In addition, we want to make sure you are aware of the many resources that are available for consumers. Enclosed are copies of consumer fact sheets about the campaign and the campaign goals. To obtain additional copies, please contact us at [insert contact information]. Should you be able to go online, you can access the fact sheets at: [http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=resConsumerFS](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=resConsumerFS).

At the state level, campaign activities are coordinated by the Local Area Network of Excellence, known as the LANE. In [insert name of state], the LANE is made up of [insert list of participating groups]. [Insert a statement about any LANE-sponsored activities available to consumers who join].

Because you care about nursing home excellence, we invite you to help the LANE in promoting the Advancing Excellence campaign. There are many ways that you can become involved. Some of these activities are as simple as telling your friends and family about the campaign and encouraging them to sign on. To find out how you can participate and get the tools to assist you, you can read the Consumer Guide that we have included in this mailing. We also encourage you to contact us here at the number listed above.

Once again, thank you for joining the Advancing Excellence campaign, and we look forward to working with you to achieve excellence!

Sincerely,

[Insert your name]
Member, [insert name of your state] LANE
Sample Email encouraging state employees to join the campaign

From: [Insert name of agency head]
To: [Insert listing of state employees]
Date: [Insert date]
Subject: Advancing Excellence Campaign

Many [insert name of agency] staff are involved with promoting good quality of care in [insert name of your state]’s nursing homes. Currently [insert name of your state] is participating in a national campaign called “Advancing Excellence.” As part of this campaign, consumers are encouraged to sign up to show their support.

I am asking all [insert name of agency] employees to sign up and show your support. I also encourage you to get your family and friends to sign up. The campaign website is www.nhqualitycampaign.org. To join, click on “Consumers: Register today” in the center column.

Thank you for becoming part of a national effort to improve care in nursing homes.
The [choose one: Resident/Family] Council of [insert Name of Your Nursing Home]

Invites you to a presentation to learn about the Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes Campaign

Find out what nursing homes across the country are doing to improve care and services and how you can join the campaign!

[insert date]
[insert time]
[insert location]

For more information, contact: [insert information]

http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org
JOIN US IN ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of nursing home]

Invites you to a special discussion about the Advancing Excellence Campaign’s goal to [insert name of goal]

Join us to:

- Learn more about this important Advancing Excellence campaign goal selected by [insert name of nursing home].

- Talk about how you can help staff do a good job of [choose one: preventing pressure ulcers/reducing restraint use/improving pain management] in [choose one: your/your relative or friend’s] care.

- Discuss ideas for how [insert name of nursing home] can achieve this goal and what [choose one: residents or family members and friends] can do to help.

[insert date]

[insert time]

[insert location]

For more information, contact: [insert information]
Sample letter to the nursing home administrator from resident/family council requesting the adoption of consistent assignment

[Cut or copy and paste onto stationery or plain paper]

Dear Nursing Home Administrator:

We are writing to ask that [insert name of nursing home] adopt consistent assignment.

Consistent assignment builds strong relationships between individual residents, their families and friends, and caregivers. These strong relationships have been shown to improve care. In addition, staff who take care of the same residents are happier in their jobs and tend to stay in their jobs. This would benefit everyone at [insert name of nursing home]!

The Advancing Excellence website has a great deal of information about consistent assignment and resources to help nursing homes in adopting it. You can get help with putting consistent assignment in place by going to http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/impguides/2_ConsistentAssignment_TAW_Guide.pdf.

The council requests that [insert name of nursing home] try consistent assignment on a small scale first, perhaps just on one wing or shift. This way, any problems can be fixed before rolling out consistent assignment in other parts of the nursing home or in the whole building.

We believe that using consistent assignment at [insert name of nursing home] is essential for achieving the quality of care and quality of life we know you want for each resident.

Please let us know by our next meeting whether [insert name of nursing home] will be adopting consistent assignment. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

The [choose one: Resident or Family] Council of [insert name of nursing home]