



The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

Verification, Disposition and Closing Cases
Webinar February 1, 2012

NORS TRAINING PART III

PURPOSE of TRAINING

- Improve consistency in NORS reporting
- Provide clarifying information on Verification, Disposition and Closing Cases by:
 - Reviewing the Basic Principles,
 - Reviewing the Disposition Codes,
 - Answering the Quiz coding scenarios,
 - Answering questions related to the Quiz scenarios and answers, and
 - Responding to other questions and examples.

Initial Comments on Coding

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Working to Improve NORS Consistency

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Basic Principles, Verifying

- **Verifying Complaints**
 - Ombudsmen
 - Always attempt to verify complaints;
 - Work to resolve a complaint, whether it is verified or not.
- **Definition of Verified**
 - It is determined after work (interviews, record inspection, observation, etc.) that the circumstances described in the complaint are generally true.



Basic Principles, Disposition

- Principle of 1:1
 - One disposition code for each complaint, and
 - Each complaint has one disposition code.
- How to choose a disposition code.
 - Follow the direction of the resident.
 - If resident cannot give direction, look to the resident's representative or to the complainant to determine the resolution if consistent with the rights and interests of the resident.
- Disposition codes record outcomes, not activities.

Basic Principles, Closing

- Close a case when
 - None of the complaints require further action from the ombudsman and
 - Every complaint has been assigned a disposition code.



Disposition Codes

Use disposition codes for *closed* cases.

- Legislative or Regulatory Action Required
 - Policy, regulatory or legislative change needed to resolve.
- Not Resolved
 - Problem not corrected or
 - Change that was made was not to satisfaction of resident in any way

Disposition Codes

- Withdrawn
 - Complaint withdrawn at the request of resident, complainant, or discontinued by the ombudsman.
 - If significant portion was resolved prior to withdrawal, record as *Partially Resolved*.

Disposition Codes

- Referred for resolution and
 - D.1: Final disposition not obtained
 - D.2: Other agency failed to act
 - D.3: Agency did not substantiate
- No action needed or appropriate
 - Determined after ombudsman investigation
 - Examples:
 - Family complains, resident says there is no problem.
 - Investigation indicates no change or further action is needed.
 - Resident dies or moves and complaint is no longer relevant.

Disposition Codes

- Partially resolved
 - Complaint addressed in part to the satisfaction or the resident or complainant, some problem remained.
- Resolved
 - Resident is satisfied with the outcome.



Quiz

- Answer the following questions.

- Who is the complainant?
- What is the complaint code?
- Is the complaint verified?
- What is the disposition code?



- Tips

- Don't over-think the scenarios.
- Base your answers on the facts presented.
- Focus on coding, not ombudsman practice and skills.

Quiz #1

A nursing home resident complains that the facility is keeping her money. “They’re ripping me off,” she states emphatically. You talk with the business office manager who tells you that the resident asked to have her own phone in her room. She agreed to pay for the phone out of her Personal Needs Allowance (PNA). She uses the balance of her PNA to have her hair done and purchase a few personal items.

You report back to the resident. She forgot that she was paying for the phone out of her PNA. She’s glad you straightened things out. She really likes having the phone because she can keep in touch with her children and her friends.

Quiz #1 Answers

- Complainant: Resident
- Complaint Code: E-37
- Verified: No
- Disposition: Resolved

Quiz #2

Ms. Douglas's daughter Karen complains that the nursing home is refusing to take her mother to the dining room for the noon meal. She tells you that she has talked to the facility several times, but when she calls at noon her mother is always in her room eating her meal.

You visit Ms. Douglas and explain the call received from her daughter. She tells you that she likes to eat lunch in her room because it is quiet. It is the only time she gets to be alone. The aides always try to take her to the dining room at noon, but she tells them, "No." She reports eating her evening meal in the dining room.

Quiz #2, Answers

- Complainant: Relative (daughter)
- Complaint Code: D-27
- Verified: No
- Disposition: No action needed

Quiz #3

You observe roaches in the nursing home. This is the fourth complaint that you have opened concerning roaches in this facility in the past year. Each time, you report to management and the corporate office. The facility has addressed the problem temporarily. However, the roaches return even though the facility has shown documentation of the regular inspections as well as pesticide records.

This time, after notifying management and corporate, you decide to refer the case to the state licensing and certification agency. The licensing agency does not find any roaches the day they inspect the facility so they do not substantiate the complaint.

Quiz #3, Answers

- Complainant: Ombudsman
- Complaint Code: K-78
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: Referred and not substantiated (d.3)

Quiz #4

A resident tells you that an aide stole his family Bible. You speak to the aide and she explains that she put it in his top dresser drawer. It has a leather and gold cover and she put it away for safe keeping.

You tell the resident the Bible is in the dresser drawer. He explains that he still cannot get it because he is unable walk across the room and he would like to read it every morning. You address the matter of the location of the Bible with the staff and the resident now has easy access to his Bible.

Quiz #4, Answers

- Complainant: Resident
- Complaint Codes: E-38 and D-27
- Verified:
 - Yes, D-27
 - No, E-38
- Disposition: Resolved

Quiz #5

A daughter calls complaining that her mother, a nursing home resident, needs to be moved to a room closer to the nurse's station because she feels isolated at the end of the hall. The daughter has a health care power of attorney for her mother. The mother agrees that she would feel safer in one of the two rooms near the nurses.

You investigate and find that there are no empty beds in either of those rooms. The daughter insists that they move one of the other residents to make room for her mother. You visit the resident twice and she tells you she wants to forget the whole thing. Her current room is fine and all the commotion about moving is upsetting her.

Quiz #5, Answers

- Complainant: Relative (daughter)
- Complaint Code: C-22
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: Withdrawn

Quiz #6

During a visit at a nursing home, several residents tell you the food is often cold. You observe meal service and visit a few other residents who also report the food is cold, so you open a case on behalf of the group of residents. You speak with dietary staff about the problem. Initially, the mealtime is adjusted to accommodate residents who are engaged in activities, but a few other residents still complain the food is cold.

You continue to work on the case. The Director of Food Services agrees that new heating lamps need to be purchased and orders them and also agrees to increase staffing during peak dining times. The management follows through on ordering the equipment but there is not additional staff. You check in with residents a few weeks later and all but one is satisfied with the improvements made.

Quiz #6, Answers

- Complainant: Residents
- Complaint Code: J-73
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: Partially Resolved

Quiz #7

The president of the residents' council complains about the amount of the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for residents receiving Medicaid. You meet with the residents' council and explain that the PNA is determined by the state legislature. The council asks for your assistance in presenting the issue to an advocacy organization that lobbies the legislature on behalf of long-term care residents.

You and the State LTC Ombudsman meet with a representative from the advocacy organization and the organization agrees to lobby for an increase in the PNA during the next legislative session.

Quiz #7, Answers

- Complainant: Residents
- Complaint Code: 0-114
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: Legislative action required

Quiz #8

A personal care home resident complains that the home provider will not let her go to the activity center each day as she has in the past. You investigate the complaint and discover that the activity center has reduced the number of days it is open each week. The resident was not aware the schedule was changed and is now attending the center each day it is open. The provider said that she told the resident about the schedule change but she must have forgotten. You discuss with the provider techniques to remind the resident such as keeping a calendar in her room with her activity center schedule and discuss other services in the community as that the resident may be able to utilize. The resident agrees to talk to the home provider and her case worker about what she can do on the days the center is closed.

You check back the next month and the resident reports that she is also attending a vocational program one day a week. She is happy with the new schedule.

Quiz #8, Answers

- Complainant: Resident
- Complaint Code: I-65
- Verified: No
- Disposition: Resolved

Quiz #9

A nursing home resident who is receiving hospice services complains that he is in a lot of pain. He says the facility refused to contact his doctor about changing his pain medication. You ask the Director of Nursing to consult with the doctor. She agrees and calls you the next day to report the doctor made a minor change in the medication dosage.

You visit the resident, but he is asleep. The nurse on duty relates that the resident has been much more comfortable during the day, but he has been calling out during the night.

Three days later you visit the facility to see the resident again. The Director of Nursing tells you the resident died the night before.

Quiz #9, Answers

- Complainant: Resident
- Complaint Code: F-46, F-48
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: 46- Resolved, 48- Partially resolved

Quiz #10

A daughter calls complaining that her mother is not bathed as often as she should be, she does not go to the senior center very often, and she has to share a room at the adult family home.

You visit the resident and observe that her skin is very dry and she reports that she dislikes being bathed more than a few times a month. She has little interest in going to the senior center. She likes gardening and is outside in the garden when the weather is nice. She enjoys having a roommate. She is happy at the adult family home but is aware her daughter is not satisfied with her care.

Quiz #10, Answers

- Complainant: Relative (daughter)
- Complaint Code: F-45 and I-65
- Verified: No
- Disposition: No action needed

Quiz #11

A son is unhappy with his father's dining experience at the nursing home. On a visit you observe all residents eating at cafeteria style tables and using plastic utensils. No one helps the son's father cut his food or open his milk carton. The resident cannot give you direction.

You and the son work with the facility to resolve the problem. The facility purchases round tables and different utensils. They schedule several in-services that focus on improving the dining experience for residents. The son is happy with these changes. Unfortunately the resident dies before all changes are implemented.

Quiz # 11, Answers

- Complainant: Relative (son)
- Complaint Codes: J-69 and J-71
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition: Both are Resolved

Quiz #12

A nursing home resident complains that only one alternative meal is offered at dinner. He would like at least two. He would also like a big screen TV in the lounge closest to his room. The facility refuses to purchase a TV with a larger screen. They maintain that the lounge near his room is too small a space and there is a big screen TV in another lounge area.

The home agrees to have two alternative meals during the week, but it cannot offer two on weekends. The resident is satisfied with alternative meals during the week, but, he is not happy about the TV.

Quiz #12, Answers

- Complainant: Resident
- Complaint Codes: J-71 and I-64
- Verified: Yes
- Disposition:
 - J-71 (meals) Resolved
 - I-64 (TV) Not resolved

Quiz #13

You notice a bad smell when visiting a board and care home. The home had plumbing problems in the past and the owner was slow to resolve them. The owner is on the phone so you cannot talk to him. The residents express being upset with the smell and tell you that a toilet may have backed up again. The staff person you talk with does not know what is causing the odor.

You open a complaint against the facility. Returning the next day, you learn that the city was repairing a gas line behind the home and ruptured a sewer pipe. You do not smell any odors. After speaking with residents and staff, none report a problem with the plumbing the day before and are relieved that the smell is gone. You conclude the broken sewer line was the cause of the problem and close the complaint.

Quiz #13, Answers

- Complainant: Residents
- Complaint Codes: K-83
- Verified: No
- Disposition: No action needed

QUESTIONS?



SUMMARY

- Close a case when
 - None of the complaints within the case require any further action and
 - Every complaint has a disposition code.
- Follow the direction of the resident in choosing a disposition code.
- 1 Complaint = 1 Disposition Code



Need more clarity related to coding?

- Contact WINC, Shelley Hitt, Chair

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NORS Training Part IV

Part IV: March 7, 2012

Watch for a registration announcement.



The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center

The National Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC)

www.ltcombudsman.org

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
(formerly NCCNHR)

<http://www.theconsumervoice.org/>

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