Residents' Rights Resources

"We may not have a choice in what happened to our body, but we still have our minds and until we take our last breath, we can still contribute to our lives and choose how we live." - Sherry W., Nursing Home Resident

Residents at Colonial Park Rehab and Nursing in Rome, NY rap about Residents' Rights. Share this video to promote residents' rights and use it as a fun way to introduce training on residents' rights!
October is “Residents’ Rights Month,” an annual event designated by Consumer Voice to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities. Residents’ Rights Month is an opportunity to focus on and celebrate the awareness of dignity, respect, and the rights of each resident.

Residents' Rights Resources for Consumers

These consumer resources highlight residents’ rights and empower residents to ensure they received individualized care. During Residents’ Rights Month share these resources with residents, family members, advocates, and facility staff to focus on resident-directed care and emphasizing the self-determination, choice, and quality of life of each resident.

Residents’ Rights and the LGBT Community: Know Your Rights as a Nursing Home Resident (UPDATED)

This factsheet highlights federal residents' rights and nursing home requirements that may be of particular importance to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) residents and provides options for complaint resolution, information for reporting abuse and resources regarding long-term care and LGBT advocacy. Read the fact sheet here.

My Personal Directions for Quality Living Form (UPDATED)
This form can be used by consumers to record their personal preferences and information about themselves in case they need long-term care services in their home or in a long-term care community in the future. The information in this form may provide some help in understanding residents and help when providing their care. View an example form [here](#).

**Residents’ Rights Fact Sheets in different languages:**
Residents of nursing homes have rights that are guaranteed by the federal Nursing Home Reform Law. The law requires nursing homes to "promote and protect the rights of each resident" and stresses individual dignity and self-determination. Many states also include residents' rights in state law or regulation.

**Right to a Dignified Existence**
- Be treated with consideration, respect, and dignity, recognizing each resident's individuality
- Freedom from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and misappropriation of property
- Freedom from physical or chemical restraints
- Quality of life is maintained or improved
- Exercise rights without interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal
- A homelike environment, and use of personal belongings when possible
- Equal access to quality care
- Security of possessions

**Right to Self-Determination**
- Choice of activities, schedules, health care, and providers, including attending physician
- Reasonable accommodation of needs and preferences
- Participate in developing and implementing a person-centered plan of care that incorporates personal and cultural preferences
- Choice about designating a representative to exercise his or her rights
- Organize and participate in resident and family groups
- Request, refuse, and/or discontinue treatment

**Right to be Fully Informed of**
- The type of care to be provided, and risks and benefits of proposed treatments
- Changes to the plan of care, or in medical or health status
- Rules and regulations, including a written copy of residents' rights
- Contact information for the long-term care ombudsman program and the state survey agency
- State survey reports and the nursing facility's plan of correction
- Written notice before a change in room or roommate
- Notices and information in a language or manner he or she understands (Spanish, Braille, etc.)

This fact sheet is also offered in several different languages such as: English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, Russian, and Braille.

"Put a STOP to Poor Care" Brochure, Webinar Recording, and Slides
The “Put a STOP to Poor Care” brochure, webinar recording, and slides, provide a basic framework to help long-term care residents, their family members, and other advocates identify quality care and potential issues. The materials include indicators of quality care, warning signs, red flags of potential abuse, and advocacy and communication tips to address concerns.

Residents' Rights Month

October is Residents' Rights Month. This year’s theme is “Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them.” The theme emphasizes the importance of residents being informed about their rights; being engaged partners in achieving quality care and quality of life; and feeling confident in speaking up about what is important to them.

Residents' Rights Month Resources for Ombudsmen

Each year a packet of materials is put together and features ready-to-use items, including promotional materials, activity ideas, training tools, and resources.

Ombudsman programs can:

- share the free resources and activity ideas with residents, families, and facility staff,
- encourage residents to participate in the Resident’s Voice Challenge, and
- use the outreach examples to promote Residents’ Rights Month.

Promotional Materials

- Reasons Facilities Should Participate in Residents Rights’ Month
- Sample Ombudsman Newsletter Article
- Sample Letter to the Editor
• Sample Press Release
• Proclamation - Governor
• Proclamation - Mayor
• Logo - JPEG, PNG
• Flyer

Activity Ideas for Facilities

• Residents' Rights Month Activity Calendar - A printable calendar (updated for 2018) with event and activity ideas for each day during October. Ombudsman programs can share this with facility staff.
• Getting to Know You Activities
• Resident Idol
• Residents’ Rights Rally
• Residents' Rights Bingo Game (provided by Disability Law Colorado)
• More activity examples available here.

Resources

• NORC Residents' Rights Issue Page
• Communication Tips Fact Sheet
• Nursing Home Fact Sheets:
  o Residents' Rights Fact Sheet
  o How to Solve Problems in a Nursing Home
  o Steps for Getting Quality Care in a Nursing Home
• Assisted Living Fact Sheets:
  o 6 Steps for Getting Quality Care in an Assisted Living Facility
  o How to Solve Problems in an Assisted Living Facility
• Home Care Consumers Fact Sheets:
  o Steps to Getting Quality Home Care from an Agency or from a Home Care Worker You Hired
  o How to Address Concerns with a Home Health or Home Care Agency or with the Home Care Worker You Hired

Click on the image below to view a calendar filled with activity ideas for each day in October!
October 2018
Resident’s Rights Month Activities Calendar

The 2018 Residents’ Rights Month Activity Calendar provides ideas for events and activities throughout the month of October. Events and activities listed highlight this year’s theme “Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them” and provide an opportunity for education, discussion and community-building for residents, staff, and family members. Put together a committee to organize Residents’ Rights Month activities; each staff member can lead an event or choose 1-2 events per week to put on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>Finish the Sentence - Post a bulletin board where residents can finish the sentence about residents’ rights and quality care. Examples: “I feel good when my caregiver...” or “When my caregiver... it puts a smile on my face.”</td>
<td>Residents’ Rights Crossword Puzzle - [<a href="http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/RR">http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/RR</a> Packet 2015 (2).pdf](<a href="http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/RR">http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/RR</a> Packet 2015 (2).pdf)</td>
<td>Know Your Rights and How to Use Them – Talk to residents about the rights they have and make sure to have available resources. <a href="http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018/packet">http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018/packet</a></td>
<td>Pets Day - Work with your local animal shelter or have family members bring in pets to coordinate a time for residents and staff to spend time with man’s best friend!</td>
<td>Food: The Great Communicator – Residents share what food means to them. <a href="http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/Food_Activity.pdf">http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/Food_Activity.pdf</a></td>
<td>Two Truths and a Lie - Try to pull one over on others by sharing two truths about yourself and one lie; have the others guess which is the lie!</td>
<td>Host a Resident Rights Rally – Get in the spirit! <a href="http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/events/RR-Rally.jpg">http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/events/RR-Rally.jpg</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Be sure to let NORC know how you are celebrating Residents’ Rights Month by emailing ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org so you can be featured on our website and social media!

For more information on Residents’ Rights Month visit the NORC website. [http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018](http://theconsumervoice.org/events/residents-rights-month-2018)

Read archived issues of NORC Notes [here](http://theconsumervoice.org/uploads/files/events/Resident-Idol-8087.pdf). If you have a question, are not able to find a resource, or want to share training materials or program practices, please email ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org.

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