

INVESTIGATION CASE STUDIES

Case Study Number 1

On a routine visit to your assisted living facility you meet a resident, Mr. Rodriguez, who has complaints about the food. "It has no taste," he says, "and they just give us a snack in the evening. That's when I want to eat my big meal." Mr. Rodriguez shows you a copy of the resident handbook he was given at the time he was admitted which says the facility serves "delicious homelike meals." You talk to the dietitian who tells you, "Our meals are all nutritionally balanced. Most of our residents cannot tolerate highly seasoned foods, but we make seasonings available to those who want to add their own. It's true we serve our large meal in the middle of the day, but that's the way most of the residents prefer it. Also, it is better for older people to eat a lighter meal before bed. None of our residents go hungry; they can request additional snacks whenever they wish. Mr. Rodriguez has maintained his weight since he was admitted."

What, if any, additional information would you like to have?

How would you get that information?

What do the ALF rules say about meals?

Case Study Number 2

The Salem office calls you to go out on a back up assignment at Roger's Residential Care Facility. Mrs. Zamboni, the resident, is about to be moved to a new room. She is in tears. The staff has already packed up her belongings and is anxious to get this over. Mrs. Zamboni's daughter is also present and is making quite a scene. "You've already moved my mother twice this year. It's not fair! Oh, good, here's the ombudsman; now you can't move Mom!"

The administrator arrives on the scene and pulls you aside. "As I'm sure you know," she says, "there are no regulatory limits on resident room relocations in residential care facilities. We told the daughter last week that her mother would have to move to make room for a new male resident. Instead of helping her mother adjust to this, however, the daughter has just gotten her mother more worked up and anxious over this change. We have legitimate grounds for this move, we gave the resident and her family advance notice-which we aren't even required to do-so I hope you can help us defuse this situation."

Who do you want to interview first?

What questions would you ask?

Case Study Number 3

While making a routine visit to Terrace Arms Nursing Home, a group of five residents approaches you to discuss their concerns. "How long is too long to have to wait for the staff to answer a call light? Last night I dropped my glasses out of bed and needed someone to pick them up for me. That light must have been ringing for at least 45 minutes before one of the girls came in to see what the matter was. Last night was annoying, but what if I'd been choking? I would have been dead before they found me." The other residents all agree that, while they have not suffered any great harm, it takes far too long for the staff to respond to the call lights. The residents ask you, "Can you help us get our lights answered more quickly?"

Who would you want to interview next?

What questions would you ask?

Are there any documents you would want to review?