

Case Studies

1. Mabel H.

Mabel H. recently went on an out-of-facility trip to the zoo with other residents from her nursing home. When her son, who has power of attorney and lives in another state, heard about this trip, he immediately phoned the facility and gave orders that his mother was, under no circumstances, to be allowed to leave the facility. The nurse transferred the call to Mabel's room and asked an aide to monitor the conversation so that the staff would know which direction to go.

What rights are being violated?
What additional information would you want?
What questions would you ask Mabel?
What questions would you ask her son?
What could have been done differently?
Who would you discuss this issue with on the staff?

2. Mrs. Smith

Mrs. Smith has Alzheimer's disease and lives in a nursing home. Her daughter, Mary, is concerned that her mother is being over medicated. The facility says that Mrs. Smith is "sundowning," that she is agitated and strikes out at others. They have told Mary that her mother is a danger to others. Mary disagrees. The facility says that if Mary does not consent to drug treatment for her mother, her mother will have to leave.

What rights are being violated?
What are some suggestions for resolving these issues?
What additional information would you want?
What steps would you take to obtain this information and to work towards resolution?

3. Mr. Burns

While visiting Mr. Burns at the nursing home where you are a Volunteer Ombudsman, he complains to you that the other "crazy" residents keep coming into his room. Sometimes they even get into his bed, even when he is in it. The nurses tell you that Mr. Burns gets confused, and is very demanding and difficult to get along with.

What additional information do you need to resolve this issue?
What questions would you ask Mr. Burns? the nurses?
How can you help Mr. Burns?
What about the rights of other residents?

4. Mr. Jones

When Mr. Jones arrived at the hospital from the nursing home for surgery, the admitting nurse had to give him a bath before getting him ready for his operation. His family is concerned that they often find him in disarray with dirty linen near him. The staff complains that he refuses his bath.

What are Mr. Jones' rights in refusing personal care?

What is the responsibility of the nursing home to provide personal care?

What questions would you ask Mr. Jones? the staff?

What can you suggest to assist Mr. Jones and the staff?