



## DOCUMENTATION TIPS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

- Record the events in chronological order by date and approximate time.
- Be as specific as possible.
  - For example, say, “My mother is not receiving adequate fluids during the day shift,” instead of saying, “The care is terrible.”
- Include “who, what, when and where” information. For example, identify which room in the facility, name and title of staff person, date and time of any incident(s).
- Keep to the facts. Avoid opinions and personal feelings. Don’t include why you think the problem is happening – this is your opinion.
- Use quotes when possible, especially to capture the speaker’s attitude, opinions or observations.
- Use objective language.

**Example:**      Describe rather than label behavior.

Say:                “The Administrator said he had no comment when I asked about the training and supervision that CNAs receive. After my next question about the complaint, the administrator said the meeting was over and escorted me to the door.”

Don’t say:        “The Administrator was rude and unresponsive to my questions.”

**Example:**      Describe observations rather than draw a conclusion.

Say:                “I saw coffee and juice stains on the floor in the activity room on the second floor. The floor felt sticky to the touch.”

Don’t say:        “The floor was dirty and obviously had not been cleaned since breakfast.”

**Example:**      Use measurable terms (e.g. can be seen, counted or measured) rather than words that may have different meanings to different people.

Say: “Hit, run, cried, slept, does not speak, calls out repeatedly, smiles.”

Don’t say: “Depressed, abused, confused, stubborn, disrespectful, filthy, clean, and friendly.