



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEETING WITH FACILITY ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Prior to the meeting

- Gather all the information you need about the concern(s) you want to address (e.g. use the Problem-Solving Process Worksheet).
- Determine what you will and will not accept regarding your concerns.
- It is important to remain flexible and open about how the problem can be resolved, but you may want to think about possible solutions to the problem to propose during the meeting, if necessary.
- Consider barriers or resistance you may encounter and how to overcome it.

For example:

- If the Administrator says, “We don’t have the staff to do that,” you could say, “How can we approach this in a way to best utilize the staff you do have?”
 - If the Administrator says, “We can’t provide one-on-one care,” you could say, “I certainly understand the enormous job you have. Can we talk about how to address the issue/concerns without providing one-on-one care?”
 - If the Director of Nursing says, “It’s not that staff don’t check on your mother regularly – you must be coming in right after she has been checked and has wet herself again,” you could say, “I can see how that could be the case with some residents, but in my mother’s situation I have found her with a dried urine stain on her dress indicating that the urine had been there so long it dried.” Can we talk about how to ensure that my mother is kept dry?”
- Understand that you may have a strong emotional response when discussing concerns about your loved one’s care and be prepared to do what is necessary to control those emotions before saying or doing something that may damage your ability to communicate effectively and work with the staff. For example, read from written notes during the meeting, count to ten, take a few deep breaths or excuse yourself from the meeting for a moment.

During the meeting

- Before discussing your concerns, thank everyone for their time.
- Work to build rapport. You could say, “I know that quality of care is important to you for each of the residents in your facility and that you would want to know if anything is affecting that care. That’s why I wanted to bring my concern to you.”
- Describe the problem factually, objectively and without blame.

- Consider using an “I statement,” such as “When I find my mother wet, I get distressed, and what I would like is for her to be clean and dry.”
- Consider using the “power of we.” For example, “Can we talk about what we can do to make that happen?”
- Reflect back, paraphrase and summarize to show that you are listening to the needs and concerns of the administration and staff. Reflective listening does not mean that you agree with what is being said, just that you have heard it.
- Establish time frames – what will be done and by when.
- Ask whom you should go to if something that was agreed to is not working well.
- Take notes.

After the meeting

- Include your notes in the form of a thank you letter, summarize what was agreed to, send the letter to the staff and keep a copy.