



## **INDIVIDUALIZED CARE**

### Information for Rhode Island Nursing Home Residents & Their Families

#### **Nursing Home Reform Act**

In 1987 the Federal Government passed the Nursing Home Reform Act. This law was passed to improve the lives of people living in nursing homes by setting new standards for federally funded nursing homes.

- The standards include four important categories: **Quality of Care, Quality of Life, Resident Environment, and Resident Rights**
- Nursing homes and regulatory agencies use these four categories as a basis for providing and ensuring quality services.
- The goal of these concepts is to create a nursing home environment that respects and supports every individual nursing home resident to live to his or her fullest potential – **Physically, Mentally, and Psychosocially.**

#### **Quality of Care**

The concept of “quality of care” means that your nursing home must provide the necessary care and services that you need (and have participated in deciding) to attain or maintain your highest possible level of physical, mental and psychosocial functioning.

*It's the quality of the care that is provided that helps you live to your fullest potential.*

These care and services include (but are not limited to):

- **Eating**
- **Bathing**
- **Dressing**
- **Walking**
- **Skin Condition**
- **Contenance**



#### **Quality of Life**

The concept of “quality of life” means that your nursing home must create an environment that treats you with dignity, respect, and as an individual. This includes knowing and honoring your choices and preferences.

*It's how the home provides/treats you with care and services that helps you live to your fullest potential.*

#### **What Should I Look For?**

##### **Dignity**

Staff interacts with you and provide/conduct activities in a manner that maintains your self-esteem and self-worth.

##### **Self-Determination & Participation**

You can choose **activities, schedules, and health care** consistent with your interests, preferences, and aspects of your life in the home that are significant to you.

##### **Accommodation of Your Needs**

The home makes efforts to individualize your environment to help you achieve and/or maintain your independence, dignity and wellbeing to the extent possible, based on your preferences and interests.



## Resident Environment

Your home should create and maintain a safe, clean, comfortable, and homelike environment. This means any area of the home that you frequently use, including:

- **Bedroom**
- **Bathroom**
- **Hallways**
- **Activity Areas**
- **Therapy Areas**
- **Dining Areas**

A personalized, homelike environment recognizes your individuality and autonomy.

## **What Should I Look For?**

Some things to look for in your environment include:

- The home should support you to use personal belongings that support a homelike environment for you (photographs, books, magazines, mementos, computers, furniture).
- The sound level of the home should be comfortable for you (especially in the evenings and at night when you are sleeping.)
- There should be adequate lighting for your needs (reading, watching television, using the bathroom, eating, etc.)

## WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

Under Federal and State laws you have rights and certain protections as a resident of a nursing home. You have the right to a dignified existence, self-determination, and communication with people and services inside and outside of the home.

Your nursing home must protect and promote your rights. Your rights include but are not limited to:

- **Be informed of your rights**
- **Exercise your rights as a resident of the home and as a citizen/resident of the United States**
- **Participate in decisions about your care/treatment, including refusal of treatment**
- **Be free from abuse**
- **Choose a physician**
- **Privacy and confidentiality**
- **Voice complaints**
- **Privacy in sending and receiving mail and using a telephone**
- **Have visitors**
- **Retain and use personal possessions**
- **Share a room with a spouse**
- **Self-administer medication (if safe for you to do so).**

If you believe your rights are being violated:  
Call Rhode Island Department of Health at  
**(401) 222-5200**  
OR  
The Rhode Island Long-term Care  
Ombudsman at **(401) 785-3340**