Residential Care Services (RCS)
Operational Principles and Procedures for
Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs)
FULL INSPECTION

ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATION

I. Purpose
To observe the physical environment of the assisted living facility (ALF) that affects resident care, health, quality of life and safety.

II. Authority
RCW 18.20.110
RCW 18.20.130
RCW 18.20.185 (2)

III. Operational Principles
A. Observe the physical features of the facility that impact the residents’ care, health, quality of life, and safety.
B. Respect dignity, choice, quality of life and right to privacy of the resident at all times during the environmental observation.

IV. Procedures
The Licensor will:
A. Conduct general observations regarding the appearance of the ALF beginning with the entrance and tour process and throughout the inspection.
B. Conduct general observations of an open resident room, if resident permits, during the tour and more formal observations during a resident interview.
C. Share observations with the licensor responsible for conducting and coordinating the formal environmental observations.
D. Conduct formal observations in the common areas and/or resident rooms.
E. Document findings of environmental observations using Attachment I. If additional space is needed, use the note page, (Attachment L).
F. Conduct specific environmental observations in ALF with Assisted Living Services Contract or Enhanced Adult Residential Care (EARC), or EARC-Specialized Dementia Care for contract requirements. Document findings on Attachment O and use Attachment L, if additional space is needed.
G. Check water temperature in half of resident rooms identified for review and document on Attachment G.

V. Information and Assistance
A. Resident interviews provide an important source of information on the environment and allow the licensor an opportunity to observe the resident room.
B. Common areas and resident room formal observations consist of the following:
RCS OPP for ALFs
FULL INSPECTION – ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATION

1. Information posted; contact for department hotline and Ombuds hotline;
2. Interior environment homelike, clutter free and with recreational materials;
3. Access to secure, covered outdoor area for walking, including dementia care unit;
4. Maintenance and Housekeeping – Interior;
5. Quality of life;
6. Safety issues;
7. Safety and disaster preparedness;
8. Exterior environment;
9. Sufficient space to accommodate residents in common areas.

C. Consult with the licensee and staff if you need any clarification of observations of the environment.

D. If smoking is permitted for residents, has the facility identified a safe area 25 feet from the building and is there supervision?

E. Notify other members of the team if you identify clinical or nursing care issues during the environmental observations, such as wound care, incontinence care, pressure sore, or injury.

F. Notify the Field Manager and contact CRU to report to State Fire Marshall if information gathered during environmental observations identifies a fire safety issue.

G. Contact the Field Manager to determine if a nurse needs to join the team to complete an identified nursing care issue.

January 21, 2014
E Irene Owens, Interim Director
ALTSA/Residential Care Services

Date