AGEIA HEALTH SERVICES

Resident Services
HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA)
What is HIPAA?

Federal law was enacted in 1996 with the intent to reform the healthcare industry by reducing costs, simplifying administrative process, and most important, improving the privacy and security of patient (resident) information.
Under state regulations, our residents’ rights to confidentiality and privacy have always been protected.

**RCW 70.129.050 Privacy and confidentiality of personal and medical records states,**

- The resident has the right to personal privacy and confidentiality of his or her personal and clinical records.

1) **Personal privacy includes:**
- Accommodations
- Medical treatment
- Written and telephone communications and mail
- Personal care
- Visits and meetings of family and resident groups

2) The resident may approve or refuse the release of personal and clinical records to an individual outside the facility unless otherwise permitted or allowed by law.
Every employee shares the responsibility of protecting and advocating for our resident’s rights.

Why is this important to me, especially if I am not responsible for the resident’s medical care?

How can you help?

- **Having only the personal, medical information that is necessary to perform your duties.**

  If you are a dietary aide you do not need to know all of a resident’s medical diagnosis. Only what is needed for you to safely and accurately provide services. For example, if Mrs. Smith has a medical condition that has caused problems with her vision you may need to know this so you can explain to her what is on her plate and where it is located (12 O’clock, 3 O’clock, etc.).
Every employee shares the responsibility of protecting and advocating for our resident’s rights.

How can you help?

- **Ensuring that necessary conversations regarding a resident’s private information is never overhead.**
  Discussions with other “need-to-know” staff should always be conducted behind closed doors, in a private fashion and we should never discuss or share in any way a resident’s personal information outside of the community.

- **Ensuring a resident’s medical or personal, documented information is never left out for an unauthorized person to view.**
  Whether it is the resident’s chart, a fax from the doctor, or notes a caregiver has written on a piece of paper; we can never allow this type of information to be viewed by others. If you see any type of personal document laying around, pick it up and immediately turn it in to the nurse’s station or medication room.

- **Never release personal or medical information to anyone, unless specifically directed to do so by the Executive Director.**
  Laws regarding the release of medical information are very complex and we want to leave the burden of this task to community management, such as the Executive Director or the Director of Health Services. Even family members may not have the right to access medical information about the resident. If asked, politely state that their questions might best be answered by the Executive Director or Nurse, and then direct them that way. This includes other residents who may be worried if one of them is in the hospital. Again, refer them to management.
Although we carry the responsibility of protecting and advocating for our resident’s rights, there are specific communications that are allowed, in general, under HIPAA regulation. For example, confirming that a resident is residing in your community is an acceptable rule, **UNLESS** the resident or responsibility party has requested identity protection. If that is the case, community management should ensure that the request is documented in the resident’s chart and that communication and systems have been put into place to fulfill the request.

We can confirm, in general, that a resident resides in our community, but we should **NEVER** pass out any of our documents, such as a resident roster, to any non-staff persons.
AGEIA HEALTH SERVICES

Resident and Family Grievances
Let their voice be heard…

Another guarantee of resident’s rights is the “Right to voice grievance, including care, and the right for prompt efforts to resolve any grievance”. Many times our residents will hesitate to voice their concerns, in fear of retaliation or simply because they feel they are complaining. It is our duty to reassure them that it is alright to address their concerns or problems with the way things are being done. **Affirm that our goal is to improve their quality of life.**
If a resident addresses a concern, take the time to listen. If they need assistance filling out a community grievance form then provide that help. Each community offers a procedure for residents and families to voice grievances or concerns. Talk to your supervisor about where the forms are located and who they should be turned in to.

As the old saying goes...”We can’t fix it, if we don’t know it’s broken”.

Sample Grievance Form
Our goal is to always handle resident concerns at a community level, but there are additional services available to every senior living in our communities.

**THE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**

This program is designed to protect and promote quality of life for people living in licensed facilities, such as, assisted living, adult family homes, and nursing homes.

An Ombudsman:
- Advocates for the rights in senior care facilities
- Works with clients, families, and facility staff to meet the needs and concerns of the people living there, and
- Provides a way to get complaints and concerns heard

Their experience and knowledge lends them to be an excellent resource for information and many times community management will use them for assistance in resolving difficult problems.
Abuse rules cover a significant amount of content, including protecting residents against theft of their personal items
When a resident moves into a community they usually are forced to leave behind many items that were at one time in their life very important to them. What little they have left is our duty to protect against possible theft, loss, or destruction. Most communities provide residents with a locking drawer or cabinet to secure their most valuable items. Keep your eyes open. If you notice suspicious activity or persons, report your sightings immediately to the Executive Director. If you find valuables left behind in a common area, turn them in promptly to the business office. Encourage residents to use their locking cabinets to secure their belongings, as well as locking their apartment door. Working together we can ensure the security of our resident’s belongings.

As a note: In our memory care communities we need to be very cautious with discarding resident tissues, garbage, etc. Many times, residents will misplace or wrap their belongings (or support appliances) in a tissue and then toss them in the garbage.
What is hospice?
Although death is a natural part of life, the thought of dying understandably frightens many people. You may imagine pain and loneliness, spending your final days in the cold, sterile environment of a hospital, away from family, friends and all that you know and love.

Hospice care provides an option for people whose life expectancy is six months or less. Hospice provides the additional care and support to enable a resident to live their last days to the fullest, with purpose, dignity, grace, in their own home. Together we work with the hospice team to keep our dying resident and their family, comfortable and supported in every way possible.
Losing a resident can be very emotional and for some almost impossible to handle alone. Hospice, also provides support for staff that are grieving and need some additional help during this time. Talk to your Executive Director if you are experiencing difficulty with the loss of a resident.

We also must be very sensitive to our other resident’s emotions after a loss, especially a surviving spouse. Make sure to report to the nursing department any signs or symptoms of emotional upset in any residents.
AGEIA HEALTH SERVICES

Pharmacy Services
The delivery and administration of resident medications and treatments is vital to good health. Residents are free to choose among the many pharmacies available in their town. Many residents choose to utilize the services of the community’s contracted pharmacy because of the expanded services they provide: 24 hour delivery, special packaging to improve accuracy in administration, and consulting pharmacists oversight. Even though most residents are receiving some type of assistance from staff, many are capable of safely administering their own medications.

Our job is to report any changes in the resident that may indicate they are beginning to have difficulty taking their medications correctly.
The community’s medication aides are responsible for administering resident medications when a resident requires assistance with this task. Administering medications safely and timely takes considerable training and experience. Even though these individuals are primarily responsible for this job, all staff members can take a part in supporting safe medication administration.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- Unless it is an extreme emergency, do not interrupt the medication aide during administration time
- Report any unusual resident signs and symptoms observed after a resident has taken their medications, such as, dizziness, balance problems, difficulty talking or slurred speech, significant drowsiness
- Reports any medications left behind, in a medication cup in the resident’s apartment, on the floor or dining room table
- If a resident refuses to take their medications the result can be symptoms that also must be observed and reported, like the symptoms mentioned above.
AGEIA HEALTH SERVICES

Home Health Services
Whether due to a return home to recover from a medical illness or an acute decline in health, Home Health Services are available for residents in assisted living communities, if eligible through Medicare or private pay.

Home health teams are usually comprised of RN’s, therapists, social workers, and caregivers. These individuals are trained in recovery and work together with the community’s staff to bring a resident back to independence.

Home health services are privately owned companies that promise a resident:

- Quicker recovery in a more comfortable, familiar environment
- Reduced medical costs without loss of quality
- Residents feeling more independent and involved in their recovery, and
- Specialized services and home medical equipment
When a resident looks good, they feel good!
Most assisted living communities offer beauty and barber services on site at very affordable rates. Services vary all the way from cut, styles and perms to manicure and pedicures. It is important that we provide the assistance necessary to remind our residents of their appointments and assist them to the salon, if needed.
AGEIA HEALTH SERVICES

Resident Guests
Our residents lives are enriched when they move into a social model of care. The things that prompt a person to move into an assisted living environment are the same things that usually improve dramatically with time. We get our seniors moving better, eating better, being more social, being interested in their community, and most important…feeling better about themselves. The more involvement they have from staff, family, and friends; the happier they are about their life.

We want to encourage our resident’s guests to feel comfortable in our communities and to provide opportunities for their involvement in social events and activities. Our residents have a right to have visitors and guests and privacy in their gathering.
As much as possible, we want to honor that resident right, but we also have other’s rights to take into consideration. Guests or visitors must be respectful of other residents and community property.

Our community has guests procedures that you will need to become familiar with in order to ensure rules for visiting are followed. Typically, these rules will cover:

- Visiting hours
- Guest “sign in and out”
- Guest meals
- Guest “stay over”

Check with your trainer during the “on-site” portion of your orientation to learn more about your community’s policies and rules.
What Have I Learned???

Time for your competency test
This is a placeholder for your Snap! Quiz

Your quiz will appear on this slide when you publish or preview your presentation. To make changes to the quiz, select Quiz from the Snap! ribbon or menu.

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