

The Senior Snippet

Written by Erin LeBlanc

Residents of a long-term care facility/community

Residents have the right to dignity.

The facility must promote care for residents in a manner and in an environment that maintains or enhances each resident's dignity and respect in full recognition of his or her individuality.

"Dignity" means that in their interactions with residents, staff carries out activities that assist the resident to maintain and enhance his or her self-esteem and self-worth. Some examples include (but are not limited to):

—Grooming residents as they wish to be groomed (e.g., hair combed and styled, beards shaved/trimmed, nails clean and clipped).

—Encouraging and assisting residents to dress in their own clothes appropriate to the time of day and individual preferences rather than hospital-type gowns.

—Assisting residents to attend activities of their own choosing.

—Labeling each resident's clothing in a way that respects his or her dignity (e.g., placing labeling on the inside of shoes and clothing).

—Staff interacting/conversing with residents, while assisting residents.

—Keeping urinary catheter bags uncovered, assisting with a resident's request for toileting assistance during meal times.

The Senior Snippet

Written by Erin LeBlanc

—Promoting resident independence and dignity in dining such as avoidance of day-to-day use of plastic cutlery and paper/plastic dishware and avoidance of bibs (also known as clothing protectors) instead of napkins (except by resident choice).

Ombudsman often hear that “the resident wants to wear it.” That is often the case when a resident is first brought into a long-term care facility and feels they do not have a choice. They might soil their clothing, and instead of having assistance with changing following a meal, this is a solution prior to the incident.

“They may forget what you said, but they will not forget how you made them feel.”—Carl W. Buechner

Erin LeBlanc is the long-term care ombudsman serving Logan, Phillips and Sedgwick counties. She may be reached at 970-630-7714 mobile or 970-854-2949 office.

Holyoke Enterprise August 8, 2013