

Realistic Expectations:

Educational Information for Our Residents and Their Families

Realistic Expectations

While we cannot protect residents from the everyday, normal risks and responsibilities of daily living, we can offer them suggestions to protect them from injury in the normal aging process. The more frail, ill, or elderly our residents are, the more likely they may experience unexpected falls, skin breakdown, changes in their medical condition, and unexpected outcomes of daily living. We encourage open lines of communication between our staff, our residents, and their family members so that mutually, we can keep our residents as safe as possible.

Normal Challenges in the Aging Process...

Often we find that our residents and their family have the expectations that we can prevent any changes in condition or injuries from occurring. It is important to understand that there are many factors that can cause things that are not within our control.

- As aging advances, problems with hearing, seeing, walking, thinking, and clear understanding may develop.
- Skin becomes thin and fragile, and may tear with even the slightest touch.
- Bones become brittle and may break even without a fall.
- Food and fluid intake may diminish, resulting in weight loss and/or dehydration. These conditions affect balance and skin integrity.
- Depression can be a result of mental and physical changes our elders experience. Some residents may become antisocial or develop psychiatric problems.

Our Response to these Challenges...

1. Healthcare and Service

- In the skilled nursing setting, our interdisciplinary teams meet to discuss resident needs and assess the residents' care and plan outcomes.
- Our licensed staff contacts a residents' doctor where necessary to communicate changes in condition and needs and to obtain physician orders.
- We encourage all our residents to be involved in social and physical activity programs. We find this increases their physical strength and emotional enjoyment.

- To assist our residents with adjusting to community living, addressing concerns about changes in health status, and understanding the aging process.

2. Employees

- We screen and interview applicants to determine their qualifications of training, education, and experience.
- Criminal background checks are performed as required by state licensing agencies.
- Employees are provided with orientation, continuing education, and training appropriate to their area of responsibility.

3. Physical Plant

- All staff members are asked to report any safety and security problems they see.
- Our maintenance and grounds personnel make every effort to ensure that security and safety systems are working properly and modify as necessary for effective function.
- Residents and families are encouraged to report any safety issues they are concerned about to our maintenance staff.

How You Can Help...

- Talk to us! If there is something that you do not understand about our services, tell us.
- Let us know about individual needs.
- We encourage you to visit your loved one often and to get to know our staff.
- Let our staff know if you see or are concerned about changes in your loved one's condition.

We Listen...

- We want our residents and their families to be actively involved in our community!
- Residents are encouraged to join the Residents Association/Council. Families are welcome to participate in activity programs & receive council from our Chaplain & Social Services.
- We listen to resident/family concerns and use continuous quality improvement processes to enhance our care.

It is important to understand that our community is not able to provide one-on-one 24-hour care. If such care becomes necessary, we may recommend that the family hire a private caregiver or relocate their loved one to a higher level of care.