

COMPLAINT REDUCTION STRATEGIES

1. Build a culture of transparency and respect (families feel heard)
 - a) Be proactive with communication
 - b) Share updates regularly
 - c) Notify families before issues escalate
 - d) Acknowledge concerns immediately
 - e) Avoid defensiveness
2. Ensure residents and families are aware of the LTC Ombudsman Office
3. Strengthen staff communication skills
 - a. Frontline staff trigger or prevent most complaints
 - b. Teach staff to use empathetic language, avoid dismissive phrases, don't make excuses, apologize, etc.
 - c. Escalate concerns early
4. Resolve problems before they become complaints
 - a. Watch for warning signs: repeated call lights, frustrations during visits, staff avoiding certain residents or families, and passive complaints
5. Create a rapid response system for concerns, round daily, complete follow up calls after concerns arise
6. Document everything thoroughly
 - a. Facts not opinions
 - b. Care plan updates
 - c. Family communication
 - d. Follow up calls
7. Make the grievance process easy and effective: if residents/families feel internal complaints don't work, they will go straight to the state.
 - a. Provide clear instructions for filing internal grievances
 - b. Respond within 24-48 hours
 - c. Track and trend complaints
 - d. Close the loop

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8. Conduct regular resident and family rounding
 - a. Weekly Administrator/DON rounding
 - b. Monthly family check in
 - c. Resident council meetings with leadership attending as allowed
 - d. Family council meetings with leadership attending as allowed
9. Address high risk complaint areas proactively (QAPI)
 - a. Call light delays
 - b. Staffing shortages
 - c. Hygiene
 - d. Medication issues
 - e. Falls/injuries
 - f. Poor communication
 - g. Food quality
10. Build Trust Early
 - a. Set realistic expectations at admission
 - b. Clearly explain staffing realities, response times, explain the process for submitting a concern and how to escalate, if necessary, introduce key staff
11. Support and retain staff
 - a. Adequate staffing levels
 - b. Recognition programs
 - c. Training and coaching
 - d. Reducing turnover
 - e. Make sure they have the supplies needed to complete their job
12. Analyze every concern (even the small ones)
 - a. Track patterns, repeat issues, and root causes
 - b. Adjust staffing, processes, or training accordingly