the advocate

A monthly e-newsletter from the
Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Dec. 29, 2014

Making Sense of MDS Section Q

As you may know, the Minimum Data Set (MDS) is a resident assessment instrument that was initially developed to help set rates and promote quality assurance in nursing facilities. When version 3.0 was implemented in 2010, CMS used the opportunity to improve the functionality of Section Q (Participation in Assessment and Goal Setting) and make it more person-centered and connect residents and their families to Local Contact Agencies (LCAs).

By placing the resident and his/her family at the center of the decision-making process, Section Q helps give individual residents a voice and a choice as to whether or not they would like to receive additional information about local supports and services along with the possibility of returning to the community.

In Iowa, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman strives to facilitate open communication between nursing facilities and LCAs – including the six Area Agencies on Aging – in order to ensure residents who indicate they would like to return to the community have access to an effective referral and transition planning process at the local level.

Because MDS Section Q is key to ensuring high quality resident care, our Office has put together a list of frequently asked questions that local long-term care ombudsmen and volunteer ombudsmen are often asked by nursing facility staff. For additional information, please visit our website at https://www.iowaaging.gov/long-term-care-ombudsman and select "MDS Section Q Education" from the menu on the left, or reference the "Returning to the Community" fact sheet.

Mission

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman works to advocate for the rights and wishes of residents and tenants in long-term care, including those living in nursing facilities, residential care facilities, assisted living facilities and elder group homes.

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