

"The Circle of Safety" Adult Care Awareness Advisor

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**News and Tips to Make Your Life Easier, Safer and Happier!
For Friends and Clients of PCALIC, LLC**



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Electronic Records Requests: How They Affect You

It seems that more and more paperwork is being moved to electronic databases and we are becoming a digital society. These new processes have had an impact on the healthcare industry. There are many benefits to electronic records, but with this comes many new concerns.

What are the benefits?

Electronic records increase efficiency in an assisted living facility in several ways. There is a decreased chance that papers will be lost from paper files or that a visitor or employee will be able to remove files from your facility. Electronic records are also more easily searchable when you need to find information fast. Typing a search term in the database can pull up everything in a resident's file related to a certain date or medication, whereas in paper files, you have to manually review each page to gather the information needed.

What are the concerns?

The biggest concern we hear about electronic file management, is "What happens if the system or computer crashes?" And "How do we transition to electronic file management?". These are valid concerns and there are steps to be put in place to minimize risks in assisted living facilities.

If you are transitioning to electronic file management, you first need to determine what type of program you will be utilizing. Will you use a company that backs up their system to an outside database or will it be something you manage in house? By using a company that backs up the data in real time to an off site database, you can alleviate the stress of what to do if your computer crashes. If you have chosen an alternate route then, it is good practice to save a backup of your computer daily.

How to handle Electronic Records Requests

With this increase in electronic file management, there is also an increase in electronic record requests from outside sources like doctor offices and hospitals. There are two items to be concerned about in these instances. First, being HIPAA compliant is a must. Sending personal information about a resident through unsecured systems is not legal. You must submit the requested information through a secure portal or through encrypted e-mails. The second issue, is do you have the resident and their family's permission to send the records? This is something you can request the family release you to do during admission or at the time of a request with an electronic records request release form.

As we move further into the digital times, it is important that you implement safety protocols in your assisted living facility to assure the safety of your residents and decrease their risks of identity theft.

How to Properly Conduct an Employee Background Check

Hiring strong team members is the foundation to running a quality adult family or residential care facility. It is essential for administrators to have a set procedure for the hiring process for many reasons including: making sure you are analyzing each candidate based on the same criteria, identifying the best ways to communicate with your potential new employees, and to have an understanding of the candidate's background prior to working for you. The latter can be accomplished through employee background checks.

In order to conduct proper and complete background checks on employees, you will need to collect ample personal information, develop a process as to what type of checks you want to look for, and have set criteria you are looking for to determine if the candidate is a good match for your adult family home or assisted living facility.

Step 1: Collect Candidate Information

Using a job application is the best method of collecting information from potential hires. A complete application should include the following items:

1. Full name
2. Social Security Number
3. Current address
4. Employment history
5. Education history
6. Certifications/Clearances
7. Statement that verifies information provided is accurate
8. Statement that acknowledges the consequences of false information
9. Signature field
10. Background Check Notification and Authorization- should be given as a SEPARATE document

Step 2: Develop a Process

Many states require adult family and residential care facilities conduct fingerprint checks through state-approved agencies. These checks will identify past convictions, citations, and history of abuse or neglect allegations. Along with these checks, it is also important to develop a system/procedure to identify any additional areas you would like information on. This procedure can be conducted by hiring a criminal background check company or by identifying the areas you want checked and conducting that check yourself. The areas that should be included in a background check are:

1. Criminal History- you can start this search by visiting The national Center for State Courts- <http://www.ncsc.org/>
2. Employment verification- contact previous employers to verify they were employed during the time stated.
3. Vehicle Citations (especially important if the employees are transporting residents)
4. Education verification
5. What has the candidate shared publicly? This process starts with a simple search for the candidate on Google. From there, you will be able to find what they have shared publicly on social networks.

Step 3: Set the Criteria for Candidates to Meet

Having a clearly defined definition of the type of team members you want in your adult family or residential care facility is the next step in the employee background checks. This will be determined by answering the following questions:

1. What are your state requirements on hiring? Who are you allowed to hire? Who are you not allowed to hire?
2. What type of team members do you want to hire?

Following these steps will help you identify a clear and concise procedure for employee background checks. By implementing a set procedure, you will have a better overview of the candidates you eventually hire to care for the residents in your adult family home or assisted living facility.

Meet our Team!

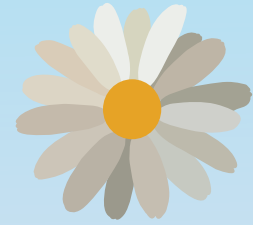


Betty Collins
Assistant Account Manager

Betty graduated from Harrisburg Area Community College with an Associates in Business Studies and is continuing on to complete her Bachelors at Pennsylvania State University. She has over 12 years experience in customer service and 3 years in business administration. She enjoys working with people to meet their needs. When she is not in the office she spends much of her time with her family and enjoys taking her small educational and adventurous weekend trips.

Fun Facts About April!

Fact 1 - The birthstone for April is Diamond.



Fact 2 - The birth flower for April is the Daisy.

Fact 3 - National Humor Month, Mathematics Awareness Month, National Poetry Month, National Jazz Appreciation Month, and Global Child Nutrition Month.

Sitting Disease: How to Avoid it In Your Facility

Sitting disease is a new type of disease that is recognized by the scientific community but not yet by the medical community as a diagnosable disease according to juststand.org. This disease is seen in individuals that are not active daily and spend the majority of their day sitting.

According the American Journal of Epidemiology, "the average American spends 55% of waking hours in sitting activities" and the research also shows there is an increased risk of death in these individuals.

What can you do in your facility to help your residents avoid this disease?

Getting residents moving that are able is the best thing you can do to help. Increasing activity has been shown over the years to increase blood flow, burn calories, and keep the body young. Some ways to keep your residents active include:

1. Walking. Take residents for walks around the facility (inside or out) or even the neighborhood.
2. Give them the option to stand. If they are able to stand during for different activities throughout the day, their blood flow will increase
3. Moderate Exercise- If your residents are able, offering exercise as a daily activity is beneficial. Some types of exercise that may be beneficial include balancing techniques and stretching.
4. Play Games. Playing games that require some movement like a bean bag toss would be beneficial and fun!

For years, researchers and doctors have stated that increasing daily activity is beneficial for the body and brain. Today they have a name for the impact and effect of sitting too much on the body. By helping to increase your resident's daily activity and decreasing the amount of time they sit, will help to keep them healthy longer and allow them to enjoy their days.

Please note, any new activity or exercise should always be approved by the resident and their physician.

Reference: juststand.org

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New Residents: Are You Prepared?

Bringing new residents into your adult residential facility can be a daunting task for administrators. Being sure that you are gathering all the information up front about your potential residents, can be the key to determining if you are able to offer them the level of care they need in their daily living. A few steps you can take as a facility to properly prepare for new residents include:

1. Conduct a wandering risk assessment.(A sample assessment can be found at www.pcalic.com)
2. Conduct/review doctor notes for fall risk. (A sample assessment can be found at www.pcalic.com)
3. Make necessary changes to the bedroom to help reduce fall risk or injury risk if the resident is prone to wander.
4. Make necessary changes to the living areas to help reduce risk of falls or injury from wandering.
5. Confirm meal plans match the dietary needs of the resident. (i.e. diabetic, gluten intolerance)
6. Review the admission agreement with the resident and family to make sure they understand the expectations and services provided by your facility.
7. Have the family list any concerns about the resident prior to admitting them so you are all on the same page and share the same expectations in regards to care of the resident.
8. Document everything! Documentation is really the backbone of any incident that could potentially go to mediation or trial. When a resident is new to your home, you know the least about them so it is important to make sure every change or incident is documented in their file to help you learn and to help in discussions with families.

By following these steps initially, you will have a more complete understanding of new residents and will have set expectations for the family to feel at ease.