

NURSING FACILITY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Prepared by the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania

Community Peer Advocate – An individual with a disability trained to support and advocate for persons living in nursing facilities. The Community Peer Advocate provides peer support, companionship, one-on-one counseling, role-model self-advocacy, assistance in developing informal support networks, instruction on disabilities rights, help accessing transportation, accompaniment in community integration activities, and assistance in decision making. The advocate shares information on independent living to those who wish to transition into the community. (From Liberty Resources, Inc.) This individual works for the Center for Independent Living or other disability organization.

Nursing Home Transition Coordinator – An individual who utilizes all available facility, community, local, and state resources to assist a person in completing the tasks necessary to relocate from the nursing facility to the community. This includes locating an apartment or making a home accessible, getting utilities turned on, soliciting a physician and pharmacy, registering for transportation, buying needed household items, etc. The Nursing Home Transition Coordinator also assists with identifying, applying for, and receiving assistive technology or assistive equipment necessary to support independent living in the community. (From the Pennsylvania Department for the Aging website.) This individual works for the Center for Independent Living, other disability organization, or the Area Agency on Aging.

Peer Counselor for Durable Medical Equipment (DME) – An individual who understands Durable Medical Equipment (DME) as well as the rights of and resources available to help nursing facility residents access DME. The Peer Counselor advocates for nursing facility residents in need of Exceptional DME. This individual works for the Center for Independent Living or other disability organization.

Nursing Facility Administrator – An individual who is charged with the general administration of a nursing facility, whether or not the individual has an ownership interest in the facility and whether or not the individual's functions and duties are shared with one or more other individuals. The Administrator must be currently licensed and registered by the Department of State under the Nursing Home Administrators License Act (63 P. S. § § 1101—1114.2). (From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

Director of Nursing Services – A registered nurse who is licensed and eligible to practice in Pennsylvania and has 1 year of experience or education in nursing service administration and supervision, as well as additional education or experience in areas such as rehabilitative or geriatric nursing, and participates annually in continuing nursing education. The Director of Nursing Services is responsible for the organization, supervision and administration of the total nursing service program in the nursing facility. (From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

Charge Nurse – A person designated by the nursing facility who is experienced in nursing service administration and supervision and in areas such as rehabilitative or geriatric nursing or who acquires the preparation through formal staff development programs and who is licensed by Pennsylvania as one of the following:

- (i) A registered nurse.
- (ii) A registered nurse licensed by another state as a registered nurse and who has applied for endorsement from the State Board of Nursing and has received written notice that the application has been received by the State Board of Nursing. This subparagraph applies for 1 year, or until Pennsylvania licensure is completed, whichever period is shorter.
- (iii) A practical nurse who is a graduate of a Pennsylvania recognized school of practical nursing or who has 2 years of appropriate experience following licensure by waiver as a practical nurse.
- (iv) A practical nurse shall be designated by the facility as a charge nurse only on the night tour of duty in a facility with a census of 59 or less.

(From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

The Charge Nurse is responsible for management of all nursing services during a particular shift. The person may also be known as the Nurse Supervisor.

Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP) – A registered nurse working in a nursing facility who is licensed in Pennsylvania and certified by the State Board of Nursing and the State Board of Medicine as a CRNP, under the Professional Nursing Law (63 P. S. § § 211—225) and the Medical Practice Act of 1985 (63 P. S. § § 422.1—422.45). (From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

Nurse Aide – An individual providing nursing or nursing-related services to residents in a nursing facility who:

- (i) Does not have a license to practice professional or practical nursing in Pennsylvania.
 - (ii) Does not volunteer services for no pay.
 - (iii) Has met the requisite training and competency evaluation requirements as defined in 42 CFR 483.75 (relating to administration).
 - (iv) Appears on Pennsylvania’s Nurse Aide Registry.
 - (v) Has no substantiated findings of abuse, neglect or misappropriation of resident property recorded in the Nurse Aide Registry.
- (From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

Social Worker – An individual working in a nursing facility who has the following qualifications:

- (i) A Bachelor’s Degree in social work or a Bachelor’s Degree in a human services field including sociology, special education, rehabilitation counseling and psychology.
- (ii) One year of supervised social work experience in a health care setting working directly with individuals. (From the Pennsylvania Regulations.)

The nursing facility must provide “medically-related social services to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident.” (From the federal Medicaid law, 42 U.S.C. § 1396r(b)(4)(a)(ii)).

Ombudsman – An advocate who responds on behalf of the local Area Agency on Aging to complaints from individuals receiving long term living services, which may include a nursing facility or other certified/licensed facility, a community setting, or a private home. There is also a State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. (From Pennsylvania Department of Aging website.)