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HEALTH

IMPROVEMENT GUIDE

Resident Safety

Safety is a primary concern of residents and their families. There are clinical practices and regulatory requirements in place for physical safety. These practices are focused on the security of a resident's personal belongings.

Improvement Recommendations

1. Be transparent about the hiring process and how employees are vetted. Background screenings should be done to ensure that employees are qualified to provide safe care. The quality of staff, including education, licensing, criminal and work history are all factors.
2. Maintain a secure environment:

    - Have consistent check-in protocols for visitors and staff.
    - Use security cameras in communal areas and entrances keeping them as unobstructive as possible.
    - Make sure personal items are safely within reach for residents with mobility issues.

3. Proactively protect residents' personal property with policies and procedures.

    - Take inventory of residents' personal belongings at admission and keep it up to date.
    - Make locked storage space available to all residents.
    - Create protocol for reporting missing items, keep a log and define them as:

        o Loss – misplacement either temporary or permanent of resident's possessions – includes misappropriation by mentally impaired resident.
        o Theft – intentional taking by another person.

    - Provide a form or process for reporting missing items.
    - Appoint staff members to coordinate loss and theft problems and assist with training other staff.
        o Hold regular training courses to stress the importance of this issue, remind employees routinely of the emotional pain stealing can cause residents and that stealing from cognitively impaired residents is despicable.
        o Prohibit employees from accepting gifts from residents without supervisors' knowledge.

- o Train staff to handle residents' items with care to prevent breakage and ask residents before rearranging or moving residents' personal items.
- o Require staff to report thefts by other team members.
- o Have a lost and found area where residents and families can inquire about misplaced items.

4. All staff can be involved in anti-loss interventions.

- Dietary staff can ensure residents do not leave dentures on a tray or napkin to be accidentally thrown out.
- Clothing items should be labeled or marked by laundry staff.
- Document where items such as jewelry, glasses, and hearing aids are stored overnight or during bathing or dressing.

5. Adequately investigate reports of missing items and follow-up with the individual who reported the loss in a timely manner.

- Notify the family of the missing item(s).
- Establish a policy for compensation of permanently lost items.
- Report suspected thefts to police, as necessary.
- Discharge any staff found guilty of theft immediately.

6. Take steps to prevent cognitively impaired residents from taking others' belongings.

- Make staff aware of confused residents entering other residents' rooms and how to kindly redirect them.
- If a confused resident is found to be responsible for a missing item, explain the situation to the cognitive resident and family.

Guided Discussion Topics

Conducting a guided discussion with a focus group or panel of family members and residents promotes collaboration, diverse viewpoints, problem-solving, engagement, clarity, alignment, and knowledge sharing-all of which contribute to the development of more effective and well-rounded action plans.

The questions below will assist in a guided discussion to help drill down to the root issues that may be impacting residents and family members based on the facility's most recent survey results. NRC Health recommends conducting guided discussions post survey on topics that the facility wishes to address for improvement.

ONBOARDING

1. What specific steps are taken during the hiring process to ensure the safety and well-being of residents?
2. How are potential employees screened for their qualifications, education, licensing, and work history?
3. How is feedback from families and residents used and considered during the hiring process and how is that communicated back to them?

SECURE ENTRANCES

4. How are consistent check-in protocols established and enforced for both visitors and staff to maintain a secure environment?
5. What specific procedures or systems are in place to monitor the entry and exit of visitors, staff, and residents?
6. How are visitor and staff check-ins documented and recorded to maintain a record of who is present within the facility at any given time?

SAFETY PROCEDURES

7. What policies and procedures are in place to proactively protect residents' personal property within the community?
8. Are locked storage spaces made available to all residents and how is inventory of personal belongings taken to ensure items are safe and accounted for?
9. How is reporting of missing items addressed, including the establishment of a reporting process, log, and form for residents and staff to document any loss?
10. How are interventions implemented to prevent the loss or misplacement of residents' belongings?
11. Are there documented procedures in place to track the storage and safekeeping of items such as jewelry, glasses, and hearing aids during overnight stays or bathing and dressing?
12. How is clothing labeled or marked by the laundry staff to avoid mix-ups or loss and what procedures are in place in the event of lost items?

STAFF TRAINING

13. How are staff trained and supported to manage issues related to missing items and theft within the community?
14. What training programs are in place to educate staff about the importance of resident property protection and the emotional impact of stealing on residents?
15. How are staff members informed about the prohibition of accepting gifts from residents without supervisor or leadership's knowledge?

NOTIFYING FAMILY

16. How is the community equipped with emergency communication systems and technologies to promptly alert families during critical incidents or safety related concerns?
17. What communication tools or technologies are in place to notify families in real-time during emergencies or safety related events?
18. Are there specific staff members or designated individuals responsible for contacting families during a safety-related event and how often are staff reminded of their communication roles?

SAFETY DRILLS

19. How are emergency drills and preparedness exercises conducted to ensure staff members are well-prepared to manage various safety scenarios?
20. Are there debriefing sessions or post-drill discussions to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes?
21. How are residents involved in these exercises to ensure their understanding and safety?

REFERENCES

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