

§ 51.80

38 CFR Ch. I (7–1–25 Edition)

(1) *Personal property.* The resident has the right to retain and use personal possessions, including some furnishings, and appropriate clothing, as space permits, unless to do so would infringe upon the rights or health and safety of other residents.

(m) *Married couples.* The resident has the right to share a room with his or her spouse when married residents live in the same facility and both spouses consent to the arrangement.

(n) *Self-Administration of Drugs.* An individual resident may self-administer drugs if the interdisciplinary team, as defined by § 51.110(e)(2)(ii), has determined that this practice is safe.

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900–0160)

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101, 501, 1710, 1741–1743)

[65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000, as amended at 74 FR 19434, Apr. 29, 2009; 88 FR 83034, Nov. 28, 2023]

§ 51.80 Admission, transfer and discharge rights.

(a) *Transfer and discharge.* (1) Definition: Transfer and discharge includes movement of a resident to a bed outside of the facility whether that bed is in the same physical plant or not. Transfer and discharge does not refer to movement of a resident to a bed within the same facility.

(2) *Transfer and discharge requirements.* The facility management must permit each resident to remain in the facility, and not transfer or discharge the resident from the facility unless—

(i) The transfer or discharge is necessary for the resident’s welfare and the resident’s needs cannot be met in the nursing home;

(ii) The transfer or discharge is appropriate because the resident’s health has improved sufficiently so the resident no longer needs the services provided by the nursing home;

(iii) The safety of individuals in the facility is endangered;

(iv) The health of individuals in the facility would otherwise be endangered;

(v) The resident has failed, after reasonable and appropriate notice to pay for a stay at the facility; or

(vi) The nursing home ceases to operate.

(3) *Documentation.* When the facility transfers or discharges a resident under any of the circumstances specified in paragraphs (a)(2)(i) through (a)(2)(vi) of this section, the primary physician must document this in the resident’s clinical record.

(4) *Notice before transfer.* Before a facility transfers or discharges a resident, the facility must—

(i) Notify the resident and, if known, a family member or legal representative of the resident of the transfer or discharge and the reasons for the move in writing and in a language and manner they understand.

(ii) Record the reasons in the resident’s clinical record; and

(iii) Include in the notice the items described in paragraph (a)(6) of this section.

(5) *Timing of the notice.* (i) The notice of transfer or discharge required under paragraph (a)(4) of this section must be made by the facility at least 30 days before the resident is transferred or discharged, except when specified in paragraph (a)(5)(ii) of this section,

(ii) Notice may be made as soon as practicable before transfer or discharge when—

(A) The safety of individuals in the facility would be endangered;

(B) The health of individuals in the facility would be otherwise endangered;

(C) The resident’s health improves sufficiently so the resident no longer needs the services provided by the nursing home;

(D) The resident’s needs cannot be met in the nursing home;

(6) *Contents of the notice.* The written notice specified in paragraph (a)(4) of this section must include the following:

(i) The reason for transfer or discharge;

(ii) The effective date of transfer or discharge;

(iii) The location to which the resident is transferred or discharged;

(iv) A statement that the resident has the right to appeal the action to the State official designated by the State; and

(v) The name, address and telephone number of the State long term care ombudsman.

(7) *Orientation for transfer or discharge.* A facility management must provide sufficient preparation and orientation to residents to ensure safe and orderly transfer or discharge from the facility.

(b) *Notice of bed-hold policy and readmission*—(1) *Notice before transfer.* Before a facility transfers a resident to a hospital or allows a resident to go on therapeutic leave, the facility management must provide written information to the resident and a family member or legal representative that specifies—

(i) The duration of the facility's bed-hold policy, if any, during which the resident is permitted to return and resume residence in the facility; and

(ii) The facility's policies regarding bed-hold periods, which must be consistent with paragraph (b)(3) of this section, permitting a resident to return.

(2) *Bed-hold notice upon transfer.* At the time of transfer of a resident for hospitalization or therapeutic leave, facility management must provide to the resident and a family member or legal representative written notice which specifies the duration of the bed-hold policy described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section.

(3) *Permitting resident to return to facility.* A nursing facility must establish and follow a written policy under which a resident, whose hospitalization or therapeutic leave exceeds the bed-hold period is readmitted to the facility immediately upon the first availability of a bed in a semi-private room, if the resident requires the services provided by the facility.

(c) *Equal access to quality care.* The facility management must establish and maintain identical policies and practices regarding transfer, discharge, and the provision of services for all individuals regardless of source of payment.

(d) *Admissions policy.* The facility management must not require a third party guarantee of payment to the facility as a condition of admission or expedited admission, or continued stay in the facility. However, the facility may require an individual who has legal access to a resident's income or resources available to pay for facility care to sign a contract to pay the facil-

ity from the resident's income or resources.

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900-0160)

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101, 501, 1710, 1741-1743) [65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000, as amended at 74 FR 19434, Apr. 29, 2009]

§ 51.90 Resident behavior and facility practices.

(a) *Restraints.* (1) The resident has a right to be free from any chemical or physical restraints imposed for purposes of discipline or convenience. When a restraint is applied or used, the purpose of the restraint is reviewed and is justified as a therapeutic intervention.

(i) Chemical restraint is the inappropriate use of a sedating psychotropic drug to manage or control behavior.

(ii) Physical restraint is any method of physically restricting a person's freedom of movement, physical activity or normal access to his or her body. Bed rails and vest restraints are examples of physical restraints.

(2) The facility management uses a system to achieve a restraint-free environment.

(3) The facility management collects data about the use of restraints.

(4) When alternatives to the use of restraint are ineffective, a restraint must be safely and appropriately used.

(b) *Abuse.* The resident has the right to be free from mental, physical, sexual, and verbal abuse or neglect, corporal punishment, and involuntary seclusion.

(1) Mental abuse includes humiliation, harassment, and threats of punishment or deprivation.

(2) Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, pinching, or kicking. Also includes controlling behavior through corporal punishment.

(3) Sexual abuse includes sexual harassment, sexual coercion, and sexual assault.

(4) Neglect is any impaired quality of life for an individual because of the absence of minimal services or resources to meet basic needs. Includes withholding or inadequately providing food and hydration (without physician, resident, or surrogate approval), clothing,