Policy Title: Chain of Command

Policy:

Long Term Care Facility is committed to providing safe resident care. Any staff member that may identify a problem with regard to resident care and is unable to resolve it should present the issue to successively higher levels of authority. All staff shall be empowered to invoke this policy.

Purpose:

To provide the structure for staff to assure resident care needs are met in a timely manner, to support resident safety by maintaining the standard of care, and to support risk management by mitigating liability exposures.

Procedure:

1. Chain of command should be initiated in conditions that jeopardize resident care and safety such as:
   a. Conflicts concerning the plan of care.
   b. Unclear or potentially unsafe orders.
   c. Unavailability or non-responsiveness of the care providers.
   d. Unprofessional behavior.

2. Gather the needed information from the resident’s record, resident care data, information from the patient/family and policy/procedure manuals.

3. If needed, confer with a peer for guidance or information.

4. Contact the person who can affect the change – e.g., physician caring for the resident, member of another department, etc.

5. If the concern remains unresolved, move up the Chain of Command until the issue is resolved:
   (The specific persons and/or positions to be contacted should be based upon organizational structure. Depending upon the type and size of facility, may also consider having an Administrative Chain of Command and a Medical Staff Chain of Command.)
   a. Department Manager/Risk Manager
   b. Administrative Assistant/Nursing Executive
   c. Medical Chief of Staff
   d. Facility Administrator
6. In the absence of the administrative team or if after hours, the administrative person with facility authority will be identified by the “Administrator On-Call” roster located at the switch-board.

7. The nurse or other staff provider attending the resident should seek and expect administrative assistance so his or her attention can continue to be focused on the needs of the resident.

8. The date, time and name of person contacted, information provided and orders received and/or actions implemented shall be documented in the resident’s record. Documentation should be done factually and objectively. Personnel conflicts should not be documented in the resident’s record.

9. Failure to implement the Chain of Command policy may result in disciplinary action.

10. Retaliation against an employee for implementing the Chain of Command policy will not be tolerated. (see Disruptive Behavior Policy)