

# **Indiana Legal Services, Inc**

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## **Using Nursing Home Staff to Solve Problems in the Nursing Home**

**Nursing home staff can help solve some of the problems within a nursing home.**

Nursing home residents and their advocates, as a general rule, should always try to solve any problems with the facility by talking to the person who has the power to fix the problem. You have the right to voice complaints, including complaints about treatment that was received or was not received, without fear of retaliation. The facility must promptly attempt to solve the problems.

Here are some people within the nursing home staff that might be able to help you. There may also be other people in your nursing home that can help. Some of the people listed (for example, the bookkeeper) may be available only during normal business hours or by appointment, if an evening consultation is needed.

### **Administration**

The nursing home administrator is the one who is responsible for the overall operation of the home. The administrator has the most responsibility. However, you should usually first go to the person who is in charge of the particular area where you are having a problem. It is important to talk to a person who does have authority to correct the problem.

### **Nursing**

There is generally a "charge nurse" responsible for the nurses on the shift.

There is also a director of nursing who is responsible for nursing staff and nursing policies and procedures.

### **Housekeeping**

Most homes have a person in charge of housekeeping. The nursing supervisors may also have authority over housekeeping personnel.

### **Food Service**

All homes have a food service supervisor who is responsible for buying, preparing, and serving food. If nursing staff serves the food, the nursing supervisors are responsible to see that it is

served properly (at proper temperature, for example). There should also be a dietician or consultant dietician available.

### **Bookkeeping**

Generally, the bookkeeper and administrator are most directly responsible for residents' finances.

### **Social Services**

The nursing home's social services staff may be of assistance in solving problems that do not fall into the above areas. For example, the social services designee is responsible for helping the resident cope with problems. A social services designee has successfully completed a training course. A social worker with a college social work degree may also be available.

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