

## Substantiated Complaints in Senior's Care Facilities

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### **What is a long term care facility?**

A long term care facility provides residential care and services for three or more individuals over the age of 19 who are dependent on caregivers for health care, assistance or direction and are governed by the minimum health and safety requirements of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, *Residential Care Regulation* and the *Hospital Act*.

#### **What is the purpose of a complaint investigation?**

The purpose of a complaint investigation is to determine if a facility is being operated in a manner that does *not* comply with the minimum health and safety requirements, and to intervene where the quality of care puts residents at risk. Protecting the overall health and safety of residents is the first priority of any investigation.

In addition, the Patient Care Quality Office (PCQO) responds to quality care complaints about your own care, your loved ones care, or care that you or your loved one expected but did not receive. For more information, or to contact the PCQO, visit [Patient Care Quality Office \(PCQO\)](#) or call them at 1-877-IHA-2001 (1-877-442-2001)

#### **What happens when a complaint is substantiated?**

Once a complaint has been investigated and is substantiated, the facility operator is required to identify and fix the violation or deficiency to prevent harm to persons in care.

When violations or deficiencies cannot be immediately fixed, steps can be taken to ensure safety in the interim and is referred to as a health and safety plan. A health and safety plan is a written plan of action developed by the facility operator to put in place to ensure immediate safety. This remains in place until the violation or deficiency has been fixed. If required, the health authority can force a facility to comply.

#### **Why is complaint information being posted?**

Posting summary information about substantiated complaints provides the public with information about long term care facilities, strengthening public accountability and transparency.

#### **What will the complaint information tell me?**

Complaint information includes the date when the complaint was received, the area where the violation or deficiency was found, and indicates whether the facility has taken the necessary actions to ensure the health and safety of the persons in care. Note that only complaints which are substantiated through the investigation process are posted on this website.

#### **What will the complaint information NOT tell me?**

Summary complaint information will not:

- Rank or rate facilities against one another;
- Issue a report card that grades facilities;

- Provide personal information of residents;
- Provide specific details of the complaint; or
- Provide information about complaints that were not substantiated upon investigation.

### **Will personal information be posted in the complaint?**

No. Personal identifying information regarding the residents, staff or complainants is not posted. The facility operator name and business contact information is available to allow people to contact the facility if they have any additional questions or concerns.

### **Will my confidentiality be protected?**

All Complaints are investigated in a confidential, fair, timely and transparent manner with particular emphasis on the safety of persons in care and administrative fairness. If the complainant requests to be anonymous, every effort is made to protect their identity. However, it may not always be possible to protect confidentiality in circumstances where matters proceed to an appeal or to court.

### **Why is there no information on the facility that I am interested in?**

Substantiated complaints are being posting as of September 2012. It is also possible the facility you are looking for is not regulated as a long term care facility; it may be independent living, supportive housing or a registered assisted living residence.

### **I made a complaint about a facility. Why is there no information on the website?**

Every complaint received is investigated. The degree of the investigation depends on the nature of the complaint. Some complaints, such as those involving abuse, are of a serious and sometimes complex nature and may require additional resources and time to investigate. The investigation process takes immediate steps to address the safety of persons in care through a health and safety plan while gathering information to determine if the complaint can be substantiated. Information is not disclosed or posted on the website about a complaint during the investigation process. If the complaint is not substantiated during the investigation process, no information will be posted on the website.

### **What can I do to ensure that my loved one is receiving appropriate care?**

Regulations are in place to promote the health, safety, and dignity of residents. It is important to stay involved with your family member's life after they have moved into a facility and to ask questions and observe any changes in their circumstance. Other ways to be involved include participating in the resident/family council and to taking part in your relative's care planning.

### **How often is the website updated?**

The information on this website is updated quarterly.

### **How do I access more information about a complaint or investigations process?**

Additional information about the complaint / investigation process can be obtained by contacting Licensing Direct at 1-877-980-5118, 8:00am – 5:00pm PST weekdays excluding statutory holidays.