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RE: Regulation Number 14-514

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Dear Gail Weidman,

I am writing to you today regarding the proposed assisted living residence regulations by the Department of Public Welfare published in the August 9, 2008 edition of the PA Bulletin. I am pleased that the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare is proposing crucial requirements for the regulations of assisted living homes. I agree with many of your proposed regulations; however, since there are omitted pertinent and essential pieces of regulations, I would like to strongly suggest that the following areas be addressed, along with the areas identified by Pennsylvania Assisted Living Consumer Alliance (PALCA). Please include and strengthen your proposed assisted living residence regulations by the following:

1. All direct care workers be required to maintain a minimum amount of first aid and CPR skills yearly.
2. Facilities should meet the best available standards for fire safety and wheelchair accessibility.
3. Provide more staff members to be on duty that will meet the residents' needs.
4. Expand the resident living spaces.
5. Include expanded residents' rights as recommended by PALCA that should be afforded to all consumers.

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6. Provide policies and procedures that allow residents the ability to challenge facilities' decisions regarding their care and placement or non placement in assisted living residences.
7. Allow residents to choose or continue to use their own healthcare providers, such as their own doctor or psychiatrists.
8. Provide quarterly, instead of yearly, needs assessments and support planning for the residents.

As proposed, the assisted living residence regulations have included essential specifications that are crucial for assisted living facilities. Thank you for identifying and responding to the needs of consumers. Please include my recommendations, and those made by PALCA, to ensure people in assisted living facilities have access to safe, friendly, dependable, and effective care. We are all responsible in ensuring that people living in assisted facilities have regulations that require the strictest standard of care. I will be eagerly awaiting the final assisted living regulations that will ensure the highest standards of care for our communities in assisted living facilities. Please do not hesitate to contact me for any additional information that you may need. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to continuing to improve the assisted living regulations.

Sincerely,


Danielle Kilchenstein

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Pittsburgh P.A., 15210