

High Five: June

5 Reasons Resident and Family Councils should exist in every facility

1. Provides a space for commonality and support:

There is often power in numbers. These meetings can be an opportunity to learn information and build trust, within the group and with the facility, and feel empowered to speak up, knowing you/your loved one are not alone and may feel less likely to face retaliation.

2. Provides a space for communication:

Allows individuals to bring up ideas and concerns. These may affect them or their loved one but also may apply to all residents/tenants of the facility. May provide opportunity to learn from others about how they have been effective in their communication with the facility, gaining strategies they can incorporate.

3. Provides an opportunity to work with and receive responses from facility staff:

Complaints/ideas for improvement can come from a collective group. The Council's role is to bring up issues that pertain to all residents/tenants. In collectively bringing concerns, the well-being and quality of life for all can be improved. Facility staff should respond to R/F Councils in a timely manner.

4. Provides an additional layer of advocacy for residents/tenants:

Legal representatives, family, and other loved ones visit facilities on the weekend, in the evening, and at off times when management and department heads may not be present. They can be the eyes and ears for individuals who do not receive visitors or have someone to speak up for them. There are ways to advocate for everyone without needing to know confidential information about anyone specifically.

5. Provides an opportunity to celebrate successful resolution/outcomes and is a place where special projects or appreciation events/ideas can be formulated.

Often, it is easier to work as a group to show appreciation or work with the facility on any special projects or ideas. Someone may want to show appreciation but not have the resources to do so on their own: collectively, this can be done by sharing the load, whatever that looks like.