



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Office of Health Care Quality

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Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein M.D., Secretary

TRANSMITTAL

To: Nursing Home Administrators

From: Nancy Grimm, Director
Office of Health Care Quality

Subject: Obstructions in Exit Corridors

Date: February 24, 2012

This transmittal is to clarify the requirement for maintaining unobstructed exit corridors in nursing homes. Surveyors have been identifying violations of the NFPA Life Safety Code 101 (2000 edition) Section 101 - 7.1.10.1. K 72 states: Means of egress are continuously maintained free of all obstructions or impediments to full instant use in the case of fire or other emergency. No furnishings, decorations, or other objects obstruct exits, access to, egress from, or visibility of exits.

Surveyors have observed objects including electric wheelchairs, linen carts, dirty linen receptacles, Hoyer Lifts, and trash cans being left in the corridors when not in use. CMS has provided guidance in S&C-10-18-LSC that items are considered to not be in use if they remain unattended or not moved for more than 30 minutes. Therefore, surveyors are citing violations if items are observed to be left in exit corridors that are not in use.

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Cook at 410-402-8181.