



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Office of Health Care Quality

Spring Grove Center • Bland Bryant Building

55 Wade Avenue • Catonsville, Maryland 21228-4663

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor – Michael S. Steele, Lt. Governor – S. Anthony McCann, Secretary

TRANSMITTAL

TO: Maryland Hospitals – Discharge Planners

FROM: Wendy Kronmiller, Director
Office of Health Care Quality

RE: Discharge and Transfer Planning

DATE: August 15, 2006

The Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) is aware that hospitals may use “placement agencies” to assist them in identifying alternatives for individuals who can not return to their home or may be homeless. Such placement agencies are not required to be licensed and are not regulated. We are aware of instances where such placement agencies have solicited services for assisted living facilities or group home providers that are not licensed. Hospitals, while having the duty to provide for appropriate discharge and transfer planning, may be falsely told by these agencies that the facilities they represent are licensed and may even provide information brochures indicating such.

It is a hospital’s responsibility to assess a patient’s discharge needs, plan for discharge or transfer, facilitate the discharge process, provide written discharge instructions, and help to ensure that quality of care, treatment, and services are maintained (Md. Code Ann Health-Gen Art. §19-308.8). Therefore, the OHCQ encourages discharge/transfer planners to verify the licensure status of any assisted living or group home if a consumer requires assisted living or group home services. A list of licensed facilities may be accessed on the OHCQ web site (http://dhmh.md.gov/ohcq/licensee_directory/licensee_directory.htm). Another document that may be helpful to patients and their family members as they are contemplating assisted living placement is the publication entitled, “Assisted Living in Maryland: What You Need to Know”, which may be downloaded from the Maryland Department of Aging’s web site (<http://www.mdoa.state.md.us/Housing/ALGuide.pdf>). In addition, if a hospital has concerns about the care a patient received at an assisted living facility or a group home, the hospital should notify the OHCQ immediately at 1-877-402-8218.

If you have any questions regarding discharge or transfer planning or placement agencies, please do not hesitate to contact Lester Brown, Assisted Living Program Manager, at (410) 402-8180 or Renee Webster, Assistant Director Hospitals, HMOs, Laboratories and Patient Safety, at (410) 402-8016. Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this matter.

cc: Adult Protective Services
Ombudsman Program
Maryland Hospital Association
Alzheimer’s Association
LifeSpan
HFAM
Voices for Quality Care
Renee Webster
Lester Brown
Arlene Stephenson

Toll Free 1-877-4MD-DHMH • TTY for Disabled – Maryland Relay Service 1-800-735-2258

Web Site: www.dhmh.state.md.us

