Objectives

- Describe the types of documents
- Understand why documents are important
- Learn Best Practices for creating written policies
- Discuss process for updating policies
Introductions

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Why have things written down?
Why have things written down?

- Everyone knows what to do
- Things are done the same way each time
- If something goes wrong, you have some idea why
- You are legally required
- Training for new people
- Ensures shared understanding

Language Matters

**Housing Language**
- Units/ Capacity
- Support
- Application
- Move in
- Move Out
- Resident

**Treatment Language**
- Beds
- Treatment
- Assessment
- Intake/ Admission
- Discharge
- Client
What are the types of paper?

Documents
Forms
Procedures
Policies

"A piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record."
- Webster Dictionary
Documents

Documents are usually things that
- Serve as Proof of something
- Are referenced in multiple situations

General Documents you Get

- Certificate of Occupancy
- Proof of Insurance
- Certifications or Licenses
- Inspection Reports
General Documents you Create

- STATEMENT OF RESIDENT RIGHTS
- HOUSE RULES
- STAFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Activity: Resident Rights

Work Together in Small Groups to use the worksheet to create a statement of resident rights.
Resident Rights

- This is not your list of house rules!
- This document is your commitment as an operator to uphold the rights of your residents
- A resident should read this document and know
  - They are a person of worth and value
  - They are participating in a program that is compliance with all federal, state and local laws
  - They will be treated with dignity and respect

BEST PRACTICE TIP

For important things like your resident rights and house rules have one statement.

Have residents and staff sign these documents
BEST PRACTICE TIP

Avoid talking about process in these documents – these are statements

Forms

- Documents meant to collect information
  - Make sure you don’t forget to collect information
  - Make sure information is all in one place
  - Document that something happened
What forms do you use?

- Resident Application
- Resident Agreement
- Emergency contact Information
- Medication Tracking Sheet
- Grievance Form
- Incident Report
- Safety Check Forms
- Recovery Planning forms
- Termination of Residency Form
Activity: Incident Form

Work Together in Small Groups to list out what information you want to collect after an incident in your house?

BEST PRACTICE TIP

When creating a form go over each item and ask:

- Is this important to collect right now?
- Is the information going to be complete enough?
- Will everyone using the form understand what this means?
**What is a Policy?**

A policy is a predetermined course of action, which is established to provide a guide toward accepted business strategies.

Policies identify the key activities and provide a general strategy to decision-makers on how to handle issues as they arise.

Reference: [www.pcg-services.com](http://www.pcg-services.com)

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**Key Elements**

- Explanation
- Who the policy applies to
- When the policy applies
- Expected actions and who takes them
- Definitions
- Does not conflict with other policies
Types of Policies

- Good Neighbor Policy
- Emergency Policy
- Communicable Disease Policy
- Privacy/Confidentiality
- Medication Policy

Activity: Real Life Scenarios

Write a policy!
Why we would want such a policy?

- Compliance
- Be good neighbors
- Prevent bad communication

Who does this policy cover?

- Residents
- Staff
What specific actions do you want them to take?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residents</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Be polite</td>
<td>• Be polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Refer them to identified staff member</td>
<td>• Record Complaint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tell staff member about the concern</td>
<td>• Answer questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not attempt to resolve issue on their own</td>
<td>• Take appropriate action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Follow up with neighbor after action has been taken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BEST PRACTICE TIP

When ever a policy instructs someone to contact someone, include that contact information and make sure it is current.
Include an effective date and an updated date on your policies

Procedures

- A description of your processes
- A set way of how you want documents/forms to be used
- Ensures things are done consistently across your organization and your team
- Sets expectations for the home
You need a procedure when a process is:

- Lengthy
- Complex
- Essential
- Demands consistency
- Involves documentation
- Has serious consequences if done wrong

Quiz —
- Do you need a written procedure for Locking the front door of your house?
Quiz —
Do you need a written procedure for resident orientation?

Quiz —
Do you need a written procedure for cleaning the bathroom?
Quiz —
Do you need a written procedure for if the smoke detector goes off?

How to write a procedure

1. **Gather Information**
   - Gather detailed information on the process you are making into a procedure. Look for best practices.

2. **Draft**
   - Write a first draft. Start by writing out the actions in the order in which they need to happen. Avoid assumptions. Avoid pronouns.

3. **Test**
   - Practice the procedure in a mock situation. Ensure all steps are written down.

4. **Finalize**
   - Have others review the policy, including board members or others who can help think through the implications of the procedure.

5. **Educate**
   - Set aside time to train staff and residents on procedure.
Example Procedures

House Meeting Procedure
Orientation Procedure

Everything works together

Policies
Documents
Forms
Procedures
BEST PRACTICE TIP

Set aside time on a regular basis to update your policies and procedures

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When do things need to change?

- THE ENVIRONMENT HAS CHANGED
- YOUR OUTCOMES ARE NOT WHAT YOU WANT
- NEW TECHNOLOGY OR OPPORTUNITIES EMERGE
- EXCEPTIONS TO THE POLICY ARE FREQUENT
How to update a policy, procedure or form

Gather Information: Ask people who engage in the policy what is working and what is not – if policy is resulting in outcomes you wanted or anticipated. Look at your data to see if you getting the outcomes you want.

Edit: Make edits to the policy, procedure or the form. Allow stakeholders to have a say regarding the edits, including residents and staff.

Test: Test the new policy, procedure or form in a mock environment.

Educate: Set aside time to train staff and residents on the new changes. Be sure to explain why changes were needed.

Monitor: Check after a period of time to ensure that the policy is still being followed. Take actions to avoid going back to the old policy.

BEST PRACTICE TIP

Keep the last updated date on your forms, policies and procedures
Even if the policy has remained unchanged, have a “reviewed date”
Resident Agreement

- Very specific to your organization
- Think critically about your house, your target population, and your program
- Seek legal guidance and support

Checklist

- Who is the agreement between
- Information about the property
- How long the agreement is for
- Fees (Deposits, Rent, Late Fees, Other Fees)
- What is included with fees
- Rules and Expectations
- Condition of Property
- How Resident Can Terminate Agreement
- How Operator can terminate agreement
- When operator can enter the premises
Your agreement should not contain a request for a resident to waive rights

Final Note

Having good documentation is a critical way in which you as an operator create an environment where residents are treated with respect, dignity, and are encouraged to live in long term recovery. It is only a piece of paper if you let it be one.