

290-5-8-.25 Dining Assistants.

(1) Dining assistants shall work under the direct supervision of a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse. Direct supervision means that the registered nurse or licensed practical nurse is present in the same room and available to respond to the need for assistance.

(2) Dining assistants are to be used to supplement, not replace, existing nursing staff requirements and as such are not considered nursing staff and are not to be included in computing the required minimum hours of direct nursing care.

(3) Dining assistants shall:

(a) Be at least 16 years of age; and

(b) Have successfully completed the dining assistant training program in accordance with these rules.

(4) Dining assistants shall provide feeding and hydration assistance only to those residents who have been determined to meet the following criteria:

(a) A nursing home's registered professional nursing staff shall determine which residents a dining assistant may safely assist with feeding and hydration. The determination shall be based on the resident's latest nursing assessment and plan of care, which is performed in accordance with generally accepted standards of practice and applicable laws and regulations;

(b) The resident's plan of care shall clearly reflect the nurse's determination that the resident may be safely assisted with feeding and hydration by a dining assistant; and

(c) Dining assistants shall not provide feeding and hydration assistance to residents who have complicated feeding problems, including, but not limited to, difficulty swallowing, recurrent lung aspirations, and tube or parenteral/IV feedings.

(5) The nursing home's dining assistant training program shall be conducted under the direction of a registered nurse and shall require participants to perform return demonstrations, as applicable, to demonstrate competencies on program components.

(6) The minimum requirements of the dining assistant training program shall include a minimum of 16 hours of training. The training shall include practical application of feeding and hydration skills and shall include at least the following components:

(a) Feeding techniques;

(b) Assistance with feeding and hydration;

(c) Communication and interpersonal skills;

(d) Appropriate responses to resident behavior;

(e) Safety and emergency procedures, including the Heimlich Maneuver;

(f) Infection control;

(g) Recognizing changes in residents that are inconsistent with their normal behavior and the importance of reporting such changes to the supervisory nurse;

(h) Reporting requirements as specified by Article 4 of Chapter 8 of Title 31 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, the "Long-term Care Facility Resident Abuse Reporting Act"; and

(i) Resident rights, including abuse and neglect prevention.

(7) The nursing home shall maintain a written record of all individuals who have successfully completed the dining assistant training program. At a minimum, such written record maintained by the nursing home must include the dining assistant's complete name and address, the name and address of the nursing home, the name and signature of the registered nurse directing the training program, and the date the training program was successfully completed. The nursing home shall provide a copy of such written record in a timely manner to any dining assistant who has successfully completed the training program upon the dining assistant's written request.

(8) A copy of the written record of the satisfactory completion of the dining assistant training program may be used by a subsequent nursing home hiring the dining assistant in lieu of repeating the training, provided that the dining assistant satisfactorily performs return demonstrations of the minimum skills required of dining assistants as specified in these rules for the hiring nursing home. Such satisfactory demonstrations of skills shall be documented by a registered nurse and retained by the nursing home in the dining assistant's record along with a copy of the initial documentation of successful completion of the training program as specified in these rules.

(9) In addition to all other documents required by state or federal regulations, the nursing home shall maintain the following records:

(a) A copy of the nursing home's dining assistant training program; and

(b) Documentation of successful completion of the training program for each dining assistant.

Authority O.C.G.A. Sec. 31-7-1 et seq. **History.** Original Rule entitled "Dining Assistants" adopted. F. Aug. 19, 2004; eff. Sept. 8, 2004.