

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWING:

Complete interviews of witnesses with direct knowledge of the event. Use the following guidelines:

I. General Guidelines

- a. The information gathered in an interview should be organized in a logical and sequential manner, regardless of the order in which it was obtained.
- b. The information should focus on the occurrence and include the interviewee's role and responsibilities in the resident's care.
- c. The interview documentation should provide an objective account of the information gathered by the investigator during the interview.
 - i. Documentation of the interview should be an exact account of what the interviewee stated without any additional commentary from the person performing the interview.
- d. The statement should be written up by the investigator and be reviewed and signed by the person being interviewed.

II. Content of the Interview

- a. Date of the interview.
- b. Interviewee's full name, title and employment status.
- c. Interviewee's statement as to what occurred.
- d. Interviewee's exact role in the occurrence.
- e. The timing of events related to the occurrence.

III. Interviewee's knowledge of any contributing factors to the occurrence.

- a. Interviewee's knowledge of any contributing factors by the resident to the alleged injury.
- b. This should be a part of the investigation but not a part of the interview. Interviewee's knowledge of another's role in the occurrence.

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This policy and procedure is not intended to replace the informed judgment of individual physicians, nurses or other clinicians nor is it intended as a statement of prevailing community standards or minimum standards of practice. It is a suggested method and technique for achieving optimal health care, not a minimum standard below which residents necessarily would be placed at risk.

IV. Conducting the Interview

- a. Document the issues and allegations for easy reference during the interview including specific questions
- b. Focus on possible deviations in the standard of care.
- c. Treat each interview separately and individually.
- d. Organize questions in a logical, sequential, manner.
- e. Be prepared to ask causation questions (i.e., do you know what caused the incident?).
- f. Focus on details.
- g. Establish a rapport with the interviewee at the beginning of the interview.
- h. Redirect the interviewee if they begin discussing unrelated subjects.
- i. Be nonjudgmental
- j. Ask the interviewee to clarify anything you do not understand.

V. Types of Questions

- a. **Open-ended questions** are broad and allow the interviewee considerable freedom in determining the type of information he or she wants to provide.
- b. **Closed questions** are more restrictive and limit the possible answers.
- c. **Primary questions** introduce new topics or open new areas for discussion.
- d. **Secondary questions** are called follow-up questions because they ask for further information about a topic under discussion.