Volume XXIX

Fire Prevention and Safety

For Staff Members in Long-Term Care

Facilitator’s Guide
A fire can be an unpredictable and frightening event. But a fire that occurs in a long-term care setting can completely devastate your residents, your facility, and your entire community. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) mandates that all long-term care facilities have a considerable number of safety systems in place, such as fire alarms, sprinkler systems, fire doors, and evacuation plans, in order to keep everyone safe should a fire occur.

Fires do still occur and represent a significant threat mostly due to the special needs of your residents. Some may not be ambulatory. Others who suffer from dementia may not perceive a fire to be a danger. They rely on you to keep them safe during a fire. Your preparation and quick thinking can mean the difference between their life and death.

Staff members, frontline care workers, and health care providers in long-term care facilities play a critical role in protecting themselves and their residents. The better prepared you are, the safer you and your residents will be.

Resident safety is your number one priority. Your residents and their families trust you to help protect them and to guard their safety … the safety of people who, in many cases, cannot help themselves. Educate yourself and stay aware of potential fire hazards. Take fire drills seriously and above all, stay calm and collected during an emergency situation so you can provide the best protection for yourself and your residents.
VIEWING GUIDELINES

This facilitator’s guide will help you plan for and conduct sessions to help ensure that your staff feels equipped to prevent fires and act appropriately in the event a fire occurs.

“Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care” is a video-based learning program. It speaks directly to the needs and motivations of every staff member in your facility, regardless of their position or job description. It can positively influence every member of the care giving team by helping:

- Understand the importance of fire drills, evacuation plans, and emergency procedures and policies
- How to prevent or limit the most common causes of fires
- How to keep residents safe when a fire does occur using the R.A.C.E. and A.R.C.E. methods
- Implement strategies for safely confining and extinguishing small fires

Conduct the “Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care” learning sessions for:

- All current members of your nursing staff
- All newly hired nurses and nursing assistants
PROGRAM CONTENT

“Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care” is a practical educational tool. It shows long-term care staff members and health care providers using proven techniques to prepare for emergency situations and to identify potential fire hazards. It also demonstrates preventive measures that help to minimize the occurrence of fires. Filled with practical information and useful instruction, this video will explain the major causes of fires in long-term care facilities, what you can do to help prevent them, action steps to take when a fire does occur and so much more.

This video training provides a unique and interactive learning experience. In addition to the valuable learning information contained in the video and accompanying facilitator guide, the video in-service provides opportunities for facilitated discussion to help involve participants in the acquisition of knowledge that will help everyone understand how to prevent fires and how to be prepared to respond quickly and correctly if a fire does break out.
SAMPLE GROUP SESSION AGENDA

Use the following sample agenda to structure a session featuring “Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care.”

Length of program: approximately 30 minutes

Suggested length of session: 1 hour to 90 minutes

Materials needed:
- This facilitator’s guide
- The “Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care” video program
- Optional paper and pencils for participant note-taking
- Optional flipchart and markers for writing key ideas
# SUGGESTED SESSION AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>Welcome the group to your session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 min</td>
<td>Show <em>MODULE 1: Introduction</em> of video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>INTRODUCE the “<em>Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care</em>” topic by leading the group in the following discussion:</td>
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</tbody>
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**ASK:** How many of you have ever been involved in an emergency situation such as an evacuation or fire, either at home or at work?

**ASK:** Did you believe that the fire or emergency could have been prevented? What could have been done? What specifically do you think you could have done?

**ASK:** What do you think is the appropriate response if a fire occurs? When should you evacuate your residents? Should you try to contain or fight the fire?

*Review* the learning objectives:
- Facility’s fire prevention and smoking policies
- Importance of fire drills, evacuation plans, and emergency procedures and policies
- Common fire hazards
- Ways to prevent or limit the most common causes of fires
- Using the R.A.C.E. method (Rescue, Alarm, Confine, and Extinguish) or the A.R.C.E. (Alarm, Rescue, Confine, and Extinguish) when a fire does occur
- Safely confining and extinguishing small fires
DISCUSS prior knowledge of fire prevention and emergency response. Try to understand the group’s prior knowledge so you can help reinforce good practices and change those that are incorrect. (Encourage discussion to help uncover staff knowledge). With this baseline, you can better understand how to focus later discussion and follow-up exercises. You can also realize how the learning sessions have helped to improve fire safety training.

5 min  
Show **MODULE 2: Fire Preparation**

10 min  
Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 2: Fire Preparation. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in this module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** Ideally how often should your facility conduct fire drills?

**ASK:** When was the last time you had a fire drill?

**ASK:** What was your role in the evacuation or relocation process during the fire drill?

**ASK:** Was the fire drill considered a success? What could have been done differently to improve the outcome? What would you do the same?

DISCUSS the importance of participating in regular fire drills and how understanding the process can help minimize the tension and confusion associated with an emergency situation. If you know what you need to do how does that affect your demeanor and attitude when emotions run high?
Show *MODULE 3: Fire Prevention*

Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 3: Fire Prevention. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the second module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** What are the two most common causes of fire in a nursing home setting?

**ASK:** How can good housekeeping reduce your facilities risk of fire?

**ASK:** What can you do to insure your facilities’ smoking regulations are followed?

**ASK:** What can you do to help minimize the risk of fire associated with residents who smoke?

**ASK:** How should you deal with cognitively impaired residents or with residents with impaired motor skills who still smoke?

**DISCUSS** the importance of good housekeeping and cleanliness in eliminating fire hazard. Explain how preparation and organization can help reduce the potential risks. Also discuss the staff role in reporting hazards and correcting problems that arise.
MODULE 4: Fire Hazards

Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 4: Fire Hazards. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the third module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** What do you think are some of the common causes of fires in long-term care facilities?

**ASK:** What should you be on the lookout for in your facility that could increase the risk of a fire?

**ASK:** What can you do to minimize the risk of fire or to eliminate potential fire hazards?

**ASK:** What role does each staff person play in reporting potential hazards?

**ASK:** What role does each staff person play in correcting potential problems?

**DISCUSS:** Describe common fire hazards. Engage group in discussion that involves them in identifying common causes of fires and hazards that may go unrecognized.

**BREAK**
5 min  Show *MODULE 5: Fire Procedure*

10 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 5: Fire Procedure. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the fourth module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** Can you list the four basic steps for fire emergencies that make up the word RACE or ARCE and describe each?

**ASK:** What do we mean by defend-in-place? And why is it the best method of evacuation for a nursing home?

**ASK:** What is your role or responsibility if a fire does occur?

**ASK:** What is the proper method for moving or evacuating residents with special needs, including an impaired ability-to-walk, -hear, or -see?

**ASK:** When not specifically participating in an evacuation or relocation, what else can you do during a fire emergency to assist or prevent the spread of the fire?
DISCUSS evacuation techniques. Engage staff and be clear in explaining the steps involved in each step of emergency response, using the RACE or ARCE methods:

— **Rescue** – remove all residents and visitors from the fire area.
— **Alarm** – report the fire. You can do this by calling out, by pulling a manual alarm or by placing a telephone call.
— **Confine** – close all doors to rooms in the fire area.
— **Extinguish** – Use the nearest appropriate extinguisher to control a small fire if possible until the arrival of the fire department.

DISCUSS staff role in emergency response. Continue to engage staff and be clear in explaining the steps involved in each step of emergency response, using the RACE method.

**5 min**  
Show *MODULE 6: Extinguishing a Small Fire*

**10 min**  
Engage viewers in a brief discussion about *MODULE 6: Extinguishing a Small Fire*. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the fifth module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

ASK: Where are all of the fire extinguishers located in your facility?

ASK: When was the last time you were instructed in the use of a fire extinguisher?
ASK: What type of fire extinguisher do you need to fight a grease or kitchen fire?

ASK: When in doubt regarding attempting to extinguish a fire, what should you do and why?

DISCUSS staff role in fire emergency plan. When is it appropriate to attempt to extinguish a small fire and what precautions should staff members take when they encounter a small fire?

5 min  Show *MODULE 7: Conclusion*

5 min  In closing, ask for questions or additional comments from the group. Discuss as appropriate.

Thank group members for their participation and conclude the session.
EXERCISES AFTER VIDEO

• Perform a fire drill.

• How do you rate our current success in providing fire safety and prevention information?
  — To staff members
  — To residents
  — To family members

• How would residents or their family members rate our success?

• What are some examples you’ve seen in just the last week or two of:
  — Potential fire hazards
  — Precautionary measures taken by staff and residents
  — Training or education to help staff and/or residents understand fire hazards and fire prevention

• What can we do to help residents understand fire safety and prevention?

  Suggest that team members accept a follow-up assignment as a proactive step in improving their understanding of fire safety.

  For example, assign each member of the staff a specific area within the facility and ask them to identify any potential fire hazards. What precautionary measures are in place to minimize the threat of fires? What else could be done to prevent a fire from occurring or to facilitate confinement or evacuation in the event a fire does occur?

  A couple of weeks later hold a second meeting and ask staff members to share what they have learned. Take note of their suggestions and, as a group, use the information to adjust and improve your facility’s fire safety plan and procedures.
Questions?

If you have questions about how to implement the “Fire Prevention and Safety in Long-Term Care” program, or if you would like information about other programs available from ElderCare Communications, call or write:

ElderCare Communications
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Phone: 800-505-3232
www.eldercarecommunications.com

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