What is Person-Centered Long Term Care?

Person-Centered Long-Term Care Community standards are applied in nursing home settings.

Person-centered care fosters a culture that supports autonomy, diversity, and individual choice. Leaders are committed to make it an important organizational value and strategy; they support it and help it mature. Relationships are cultivated among residents, families/support systems, and staff members. It promotes responsiveness, spontaneity, and continuous learning and growth. Lifecycles are celebrated and residents and staff members stay connected to the local community.

In person-centered long-term care, the long-term care setting is the resident’s home and residents are the experts regarding life in their home. Residents participate in deciding about the rhythm of their day, the services provided to them, and the issues that are important to them. Their families/support systems are partners with residents and staff members in deciding the services residents want, how they should be delivered, and how residents can help.

CARF’s Person-Centered Long-Term Care Community (PCLTCC) standards serve as a guide for nursing homes that embrace a person-centered care philosophy.

We encourage you to review the standards, put them to work in your organization, and become an accredited PCLTCC.

For more information

To learn how you can pursue accreditation for your nursing home, contact our staff at 866.888.1122, or visit us online at www.carf.org/aging.

CARF–CCAC

CARF, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, is an international not-for-profit organization that has promoted quality in the human services field through accreditation since 1966. In 2003, CARF acquired the Continuing Care Accreditation Commission (CCAC), which was created in 1985 to help ensure that the nation’s retirement communities fulfill their promise of quality, lifetime care to older persons.

We did the best we could, with what we knew, And when we knew better, we did better. —Dr. Maya Angelou poet, educator, historian

Cover Illustration: “Waiting” by Carmen M. Enriquez Part of CARF’s collection of artwork celebrating the creativity of individuals receiving services from accredited organizations around the world.
Quality for the future

Our society faces many challenges when considering the long-term care needs of our nation’s older persons. The face of our aging population is changing. The entrance of baby boomers into the elder-care market will bring numerous challenges to the current providers of long-term care, both in an increase in the volume and the quality of services demanded by a population that is accustomed to making informed and independent choices. If we want to create places where persons will want to live, we first need to know what they want. Research confirms two key markers of quality for those who live and those who work in long-term care:

• the relationship between the caregiver and the recipient of care
• the ability of the person served to make choices.

When asked to choose one measure of quality, the choice will almost always be for quality of life.

In addition to the physical changes faced by an aging population, changes in philosophy and attitude accompany maturity. Foremost is a belief that residents and staff members should be treated with greater humanity. Research evidence confirms in nursing homes that adopt and implement a person-centered care philosophy, residents say they have a higher quality of life and employees report they are more satisfied with their work. This is the recipe for quality.

A framework for a person-centered home

Major components of the CARF PCLTCC Standards include:

Building relationships
Maximizing choice
Helping residents achieve personal goals
Involving residents in the external community
Celebrating and respecting lifecycle events
Sharing information with residents
Supporting transitions within and out of the home
Establishing collaborative teams
Empowering caregivers
Providing a safe and secure environment

How the standards were developed

The standards represent an international consensus. Development began when CARF convened a three-day International Advisory Committee composed of leading innovators in the field of person-centered long-term care from the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Residents of a nursing home that is establishing a person-centered environment also participated in a focus group. The input from both these groups helped to form the standards.

A draft of the standards was submitted to the field for review and refinement. Hundreds of consumers, caregivers, providers, payers, and regulators studied and commented on the standards before their publication.