



Steps to an Effective Family Council

- 1** Identify 3-4 family members that are involved with the facility. Explain to them the purpose of a family council, and ask them if they can commit to being a part. Congratulations, you now have a **steering committee**.
- 2** **Inform appropriate staff** that you are forming a family council. This would include the administrator, and oftentimes the activity director or social worker. All members of the steering committee will attend this meeting to communicate to the administrator that this is a group effort. If you do not feel comfortable meeting with the administrator, **contact Illinois Citizens for Better Care**, and we will prepare/accompany you.
- 3** **Follow up on your meeting with the administrator.** Was the flier received? Who is your staff liaison? Has a notice of your meeting been posted where family members are sure to see it? Where is your meeting? Who is providing refreshments? Personally contact as many family members as you can, via phone or while visiting your loved one. People are more likely to attend if someone has personally invited them.
- 4** **Plan an informational meeting.** Contact ICBC to help. Collectively, you should make an informal agenda to ensure that your meeting is professional and concise; this will encourage attendance if members feel it's a good use of their time.
- 5** **Hold an informational meeting.** Contact ICBC to assist. (1) Explain what a family council is, what one does, and why it is important to form one in your facility. (2) Discern family interest. (3) Collectively agree upon a regular meeting time and place. (4) If you haven't yet formed a steering committee, ask for a few volunteers to help plan the next meeting. It is best to involve many different people.
- 6** **Follow-up** the informational meeting. (1) Post minutes on family council board, and give copies to the staff liaison (2) Post next meeting time, and contact family members. Ask the facility to send notice of the meeting in the next billing or newsletter. (3) Plan first meeting. Contact ICBC for support.
- 7** **First Family Council Meeting** (1) Adopt a mission statement and bylaws. See the attached examples. (2) Have Elections. Spread the responsibility amongst the greatest number of members. This ensures sustainability of the group, and that the interests of the group are being expressed. (3) Address Concerns (4) Form an Action Plan
- 8** Repeat Steps 6 and 7. Continue to recruit. Congratulations! **You have a Family Council!**