

Protecting the Elderly: ForAccess.com adds GROW Coalition link on site

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SAN ANTONIO, TX— There are approximately 1.5 million frail, elderly, and disabled residents currently living in America's nursing homes. For many adult children, placing mom or dad in a long term care facility remains a difficult and exhausting decision. Concerns about the quality of care, the level of attention, the overall quality of life and the cost to provide such care weigh heavily on those caring for elderly family members.

“The number of people residing in long term care facilities will only increase as Americans live longer through improved medical care. We certainly all want the best care for our loved ones,” stated Jeanne Fuller, President of ForAccess.com. “For this reason, we are proud to announce the addition of the GROW Coalition as one of the quality non-profit links included on our site.”

The GROW Coalition (www.foraccess.com/info/linkInfo/200) was founded, by Diana Waugh and Mary Harroun, in response to the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes campaign to address health concerns related to care of nursing home residents. In the fall of 2006, leaders from national associations representing government, nursing home providers, and consumers met to discuss how to adopt roles and share responsibility to fulfill the campaign's mission of improving quality of care and quality of life in America's nursing homes.

A primary goal of the campaign is to strengthen public trust in the care provided by nursing homes by focusing on quality improvement and transparent accountability.

Diana Waugh, co-founder of the GROW Coalition, states, “GROW stands for getting residents out of wheelchairs. It is the goal of the GROW Coalition that residents residing in nursing homes use regular seating devices in situations where sitting in a regular chair makes common sense. For example, eating, talking with family members, and watching TV are all activities that most people participate in while sitting on a chair, couch, or a recliner.”

The concerns addressed by GROW are valid. In some long term care facilities, residents are often left in wheelchairs for extended periods of time. They eat, visit, and even sleep in these chairs with little to no physical exercise. This may result in pressure ulcers, decreased muscle strength, and an increase in generalized pain. Historically, the use of wheeled chairs as both a stationary seating device and a mobility device has been virtually standard practice in long term care facilities. However, as the industry strives for a more person-centered experience, it is the desire of many to regulate the use of wheelchairs.

When nursing home staff maximize resident mobility by encouraging normal sitting, walking and movement patterns, it improves health delivery and quality of care.

The GROW Coalition provides an informative website that specifically addresses the unnecessary reliance of wheelchairs in the nursing homes. The GROW Coalition wants to help nursing home staff maximize resident mobility by encouraging walking in normal situations such as walking to meals, wandering in the garden, and walking to daily activities.

“The Grow Coalition is the type of non-profit organization ForAccess.com believes will be a valuable resource for families worldwide.” Fuller says, “By providing needed information offered by the GROW Coalition, we hope our members, visitors to our site and their families are given a tool to help them ask necessary questions before placing a loved one in a nursing facility.”

Read more about the GROW Coalition by visiting the ForAccess.com site and www.foraccess.com/info/viewArticleDetails/54.

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ForAccess.com
Jennifer Bays
info@ForAccess.com
210-614-9911

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