



# **MEDICAL DIRECTOR: ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS LEADER AND MANAGER**

## **FUNCTIONS AND ASSOCIATED TASKS**

### **Function 1 - Administrative**

The medical director participates in administrative decision making and recommends and approves policies and procedures.

### **Function 2 – Professional Services**

The medical director organizes and coordinates physician services and services provided by other professionals as they relate to patient care.

### **Function 3 - Quality Assurance**

The medical director participates in the process to ensure the appropriateness and quality of medical care and medically related care

### **Function 4 - Education**

The medical director participates in the development and conduct of educational programs.

### **Function 5 – Employee Health**

The medical director participates in the surveillance and promotion in the health safety, and welfare of employees.

### **Function 6 - Community**

The medical director helps articulate the long-term care facility's mission to the community.

### **Function 7 – Rights of Individuals**

The medical director participates in establishing policies and procedures for assuring that the rights of individuals (resident, staff members, and community members) are respected.

### **Function 8 - Social, Regulatory, Political, and Economic Factors**

The medical director acquires, maintains, and applies knowledge of social, regulatory, political, and economic factors that relate to patient care services.

### **Function 9 - Person-Directed Care**

The medical director will support and promote person-directed care.

**See the following pages of this document for a list of tasks associated with each of these functions.**

### **Function 1 - Administrative**

**The medical director participates in administrative decision making and recommends and approves policies and procedures.**

#### **Task 1**

The medical director meets regularly with the administrator, the director of nursing, and other decision makers in the nursing home and provides leadership needed to achieve medical care goals

#### **Task 2**

The medical director participates in the development and periodic evaluation of policies and procedures and reviews the policies and procedures manual annually.

#### **Task 3**

The medical director participates in the activities of quality assurance; pharmacy, infection control, safety and medical care committees.

#### **Task 4**

The medical director stays informed about factors that affect long term care and incorporates social, medical, and fiscal changes into policies and procedures.

#### **Task 5**

The medical director participates in surveys and interacts with outside regulatory agencies.

#### **Task 6**

The medical director negotiates his or her contract and job description, prepares a quarterly report, and defines the medical director's role in the nursing home.

#### **Task 7**

The medical director keeps medical staff informed of changes in policies and procedures.

#### **Task 8**

The medical director understands multi-facility corporate policies and procedures and strategies for effecting and dealing with change.

#### **Task 9**

The medical director participates in disciplinary actions of the organization when appropriate.

## **Function 2 – Professional Services**

**The medical director organizes and coordinates physician services and services provided by other professionals as they relate to patient care.**

### **Task 1**

The medical director organizes coordinates and monitors the activities of the medical staff and ensures that the quality and appropriateness of services meets community standards.

### **Task 2**

The medical director develops and periodically reviews by-laws governing physician services

### **Task 3**

The medical director arranges for the availability of qualified consultative staff, maintains involvement in contract negotiations with these professionals, and represents them to the administration

### **Task 4**

The medical director assures coverage for medical emergencies and participates in decisions about the kind of emergency equipment and drug supplies that are to be kept available to meet patient's needs

### **Task 5**

The medical director assists the administrator in establishing affiliation agreements with other health care institutions and helps promote rapport between the nursing home and regulatory agencies, professional groups, insuring agencies, ambulance and emergency groups, and individual health care services

### **Task 6**

The medical director facilitates the activities of the interdisciplinary team

### **Task 7**

The medical director arranges for the availability of qualified specialists and maintains involvement in contract negotiations with these professionals.

### **Task 8**

The medical director assures that medical records systems meet the needs of patients.

### **Task 9**

The medical director assures adequate documentation of health care.

### **Task 10**

The medical director develops and periodically reviews policies that govern the practice of physician assistants and nurse practitioners in the facility

### **Task 11**

The medical director participates in the development of PRO contracts

### **Task 12**

The medical director develops policies and procedures related to activities of individuals participating in educational activities within the facility (physicians in residency programs, medical students, student nurses).

Task 13

The medical director assures that the nursing staff members attend physicians on rounds.

Task 14

The medical director makes summary decisions when admissions, orders, and/or transfers are considered inappropriate.

Task 15

The medical director conducts regular meetings with outside providers of nursing home services in the nursing home.

Task 16

The medical director participates, when necessary, in family meetings and similar activities to assist the facility and/or attending physician to promote optimal resident care.

### **Function 3 - Quality Assurance**

**The medical director participates in the process to ensure the appropriateness and quality of medical care and medically related care**

#### **Task 1**

The medical director participates in the monitoring of care within the facility through a quality assurance program that encourages self-evaluation, anticipates and plans for change and meets regulations

#### **Task 2**

The medical director maintains knowledge of state and national standards for nursing home care and ensures that the facility meets the minimal acceptable standards of care.

#### **Task 3**

The medical director understands basic research methods, utilizes sound research methods when conducting medical care evaluation studies, evaluates and reviews the feasibility and goals of research projects, and fosters a facility-wide attitude that is supportive of research and open to change.

#### **Task 4**

The medical director monitors physician performance and involves the attending physician in the setting of quality assurance standards.

#### **Task 5**

The medical director ensures that the quality assurance program addresses issues germane to the quality of patient care.

#### **Task 6**

The medical director utilizes the quality assurance program to effect changes in policies and procedures.

#### **Task 7**

The medical director establishes with the administration a means for disseminating information gained from the quality assurance program to residents, family members, staff members, attending physicians, and other appropriate personnel.

#### **Task 8**

The medical director serves as chairman of an institutional committee to review the feasibility and goals of research projects and disseminates research findings.

#### **Task 9**

The medical director participates in quality review of care within the facility in those specific areas mandated by law (e.g. drug level monitoring, laboratory indicator monitoring).

#### **Task 10**

The medical director reviews periodically admission transfers, and discharges of patients.

#### **Task 11**

The medical director participates in time management studies.

Task 12

The medical director solicits private and public funding for research activities.

Task 13

The medical director provides medical leadership for research and development activities in long term care.

#### **Function 4 - Education**

**The medical director participates in the development and conduct of educational programs.**

##### **Task 1**

The medical director promotes his or her professional development through self-directed and continuing education.

##### **Task 2**

The medical director participates in the education and training activities of nursing home staff members and identifies and suggests topics for in-service training through observation and evaluation of patient care.

##### **Task 3**

The medical director participates in the development, organization, and delivery of education programs for residents, resident's families, board members, and the community at large

##### **Task 4**

The medical director serves as a resource for information about geriatric medicine and ancillary subjects and shares educational resources (books, periodicals, articles) with other professional staff members.

##### **Task 5**

The medical director informs attending physicians about changes in policies and procedures and keeps them abreast of changes in state and federal regulations.

##### **Task 6**

The medical director assists in developing mechanisms for ensuring a regular flow of educational materials to internal and external audiences.

##### **Task 7**

The medical director assures time and access to in-service training for staff.

##### **Task 8**

The medical director encourages institution-sponsored membership in professional organizations for staff.

##### **Task 9**

The medical director encourages special certification of staff members when appropriate.

##### **Task 10**

The medical director writes articles for in-house publications.

##### **Task 11**

The medical director promotes education opportunities that exist in the nursing home for students preparing for positions in the health care profession.

### **Function 5 – Employee Health**

**The medical director participates in the surveillance and promotion in the health safety, and welfare of employees.**

#### Task 1

The medical director fosters a sense of self-worth and professionalism among employees.

#### Task 2

The medical director participates in a program to monitor, evaluate, and modify activities that might cause injury and illness.

#### Task 3

The medical director participates in a placement process that includes an assessment of physical activity and other capacities required by the job.

#### Task 4

The medical director participates in the activities of the safety committee.

#### Task 5

The medical director promotes employee wellness programs (e.g. weight reduction, stress reduction, cholesterol reduction, blood pressure reduction, nutrition, exercise).

#### Task 6

The medical director develops a program for an employee experiencing physical, social, or substance abuse that includes intervention and rehabilitation measures and that identifies community resources to assist employees with psychological and social problems.

#### Task 7

The medical director develops and monitors a policy for helping maintain the health and safety of visitors and volunteers.

#### Task 8

The medical director monitors patient behavior to prevent employee injury.

#### Task 9

The medical director encourages the use of assistive devices by employees.

#### Task 10

The medical director monitors community trends in infectious diseases.

#### Task 11

The medical director keeps staff members informed of potential hazards to their health and safety.



## **Function 6 - Community**

**The medical director helps articulate the long-term care facility's mission to the community.**

### Task 1

The medical director acts as an advocate for the facility, encourages and facilitates community involvement in the activities of the facility, and assists the community in achieving a realistic understanding of the facility's capabilities and services.

### Task 2

The medical director participates in the activities of the local health care community and seeks out opportunities for integrating other health programs into the services of the facility.

### Task 3

The medical director participates in the activities of geriatric committees and long term care committees of medical organizations and identifies issues and seeks solutions to problems that involve other institutions and programs.

### Task 4

The medical director participates in health care planning in the community and provides leadership in developing creative and innovative cost-effective alternative health care programs for long term care.

### Task 5

The medical director reviews admissions and transfers to evaluate changes in the facility's resident mix.

### Task 6

The medical director serves as a mentor to physicians in training within the facility.

### Task 7

The medical director participates in health care planning in the community.

### Task 8

The medical director integrates other efficient and effective health programs into the long term care facility (e.g., hospice, AA)

### Task 9

The medical director applies a system approach to health care

### Task 10

The medical director represents the facility in the event of "untoward" events.

### Task 11

The medical director identifies and utilizes local leaders in the community.

### Task 12

The medical director meets regularly with other long-term care professionals in the community.

### **Function 7 – Rights of Individuals**

**The medical director participates in establishing policies and procedures for assuring that the rights of individuals (resident, staff members, and community members) are respected.**

#### Task 1

The medical director establishes policies and procedures for physicians to follow when limiting treatment or withdrawing treatment.

#### Task 2

The medical director uses the patients' bill of rights as a guide to assuring patients' rights.

#### Task 3

The medical director participates in the activities of the institutional biomedical ethics committee and identifies community resources that can assist in resolving ethical and legal issues.

#### Task 4

The medical director ensures that the ethical and legal rights of incompetent patients are respected.

#### Task 5

The medical director assures the right of patients to self-determination, privacy, and confidentiality.

#### Task 6

The medical director establishes a system for identifying and reporting abuse and establishes criteria for identifying potential abuse among both residents and staff members.

#### Task 7

The medical director understands and applies legal precedents that relate to patients' rights.

#### Task 8

The medical director facilitates the patients' choice of physician.

#### Task 9

The medical director assures that policies and procedures reflect the intent of the bill of rights.

#### Task 10

The medical director identifies community resources available to resolve ethical issues (e.g., ombudsman, health department, ministerial association).

#### Task 11

The medical director assures the right of patient self-determination through the use of living wills and durable power of attorney.

#### Task 12

The medical director participates, when necessary, in family meetings and similar activities to assist the facility and/or attending physician to assure respect for resident rights by facility staff and family members.

### **Function 8 - Social, Regulatory, Political, and Economic Factors**

**The medical director acquires, maintains, and applies knowledge of social, regulatory, political, and economic factors that relate to patient care services.**

#### **Task 1**

The medical director analyzes and evaluates the medical implications of the social, regulatory, political, and economic changes that affect patient care in the long term care facility.

#### **Task 2**

The medical director acquires an understanding of municipal, county; state and federal regulations related to long-term care and provides feedback to legislators, policy makers, and local decision makers on existing and proposed rules and regulations.

#### **Task 3**

The medical director seeks out information about aging, long-term care, and geriatric medicine and disseminates the relevant information to staff members and residents.

#### **Task 4**

The medical director understands the mechanisms for long-term care reimbursement and establishes relationships with other organizations involved in long-term care to assure that patients' needs are met in sites across the continuum of care.

#### **Task 5**

The medical director who understands the tension that exists between the social responsibility to care for chronically ill and frail elderly and the financial constraints that effect the delivery of care will be better able to ensure the delivery of appropriate care within the constraints of economic and social realities.

#### **Task 6**

The medical director participates in cost containment decisions that affect medical care (e.g., use of formularies, contracts, appropriate use of lab, medication).

#### **Task 7**

The medical director participates in the facility budget process to assure the availability of resources for medical functions.

### **Function 9 - Person-Directed Care**

**The medical director will support and promote person-directed care.**

#### **Task 1**

Provides oversight to clinical and administrative staff to help maintain and continuously improve the quality of care (e.g., help develop metrics and periodically analyze processes and results to monitor the success of person-directed approaches).

#### **Task 2**

Encourage active resident participation in, and promote the incorporation of resident preferences and goals into development of an individualized plan of care.

#### **Task 3**

Helps develop, implement, and review policies and procedures that ensure residents are offered choices that promote comfort and dignity (e.g., choices regarding awakening, sleep, and medication administration times, discussions of risk/benefits regarding medicalized diets, medications and treatments).

#### **Task 4**

Collaborates with the interdisciplinary team (IDT), the family, and allied services within and outside of the organization to encourage planning, implementing, and evaluating clinical services to maximize resident choice, quality of life, and quality of care.

#### **Task 5**

Educates physicians and other medical professionals on maintaining clinical standards in the context of individualized care.

#### **Task 6**

Collaborates with nursing home leadership to create a person-directed care environment while maintaining standards of care.