



MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Results of Nursing Home Satisfaction Survey Are Released
MHCC guide is designed to help with difficult choices

BALTIMORE, MD (January 24, 2008) -- Maryland residents often wonder if it is time to place a loved one in a nursing home. That difficulty can be compounded by having to choose the facility that is best able to meet the needs of their family members.

2007 Maryland Nursing Home Family Survey, released on January 22, may help with the decision-making process. It is part of the Maryland Health Care Commission's *Maryland Nursing Home Guide*, a resource designed to provide Maryland residents with information about nursing home performance.

"This survey is just one of many reporting activities that are an integral part of the Commission's transparency initiative to provide helpful information to consumers and foster competition for excellence among providers of health care services," according to Dr. Rex Cowdry, Executive Director, Maryland Health Care Commission. "Many individuals prefer to receive care in their homes or community, but for those with complex medical needs a nursing home may be the best option." Dr. Cowdry suggests consumers use the results of the Family Survey, the quality of care measures found in the Maryland Nursing Home Guide and schedule personal visits to nursing homes when considering placing a loved one in a Maryland nursing home.

The 2007 Maryland Nursing Home Survey rates the family member's overall assessment of the physical aspects of the nursing home, the care provided to residents, activities available, resident rights, assistance during mealtime, quality and variety of food, and staff. Complete survey results are on the Commission's Web site at www.mhcc.maryland.gov. Click on "Consumers", "Nursing Home Guide" then "2007 Family Satisfaction Survey".

"The survey results serve two important purposes: providing comparative performance information to consumers interested in selecting a nursing home for themselves or for a family member, and providing nursing home administrators and staff comparative information on areas where their nursing home excels or where there is opportunity for improvement.," added Bruce Kozlowski, Director, Maryland Health Care Commission Center for Long-Term and Community-Based Services.

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All of the 224 Maryland nursing homes with residents who stayed at least 90 days participated in the survey. More than 17,000 surveys were mailed out and more than half (58.4%) were returned, which is an above average rate of return. Individual nursing homes received a report with facility-specific results and comparisons to statewide averages.

Statewide results show:

- ! The overall rating of the care provided at the nursing home is 8.2 on a 10.0 point scale. 53 percent of respondents rate the care as a 9 or 10.
- ! 88 percent of respondents said they would recommend the nursing home to someone who needs nursing home care.

The *Maryland Nursing Home Guide* includes information on the performance, quality of care and results of recent inspection visits for more than 200 comprehensive care nursing facilities and 34 continuing care retirement communities. The Guide also features information on patient rights, how to pay for nursing home care, a checklist on how to choose a nursing home, and a search feature.

The Guide's Web site receives nearly 20,000 visits annually and is continually updated. In addition to posting the 2007 survey results, the Commission is preparing to add quality measures that show influenza and pneumococcal vaccination rates for nursing home residents.

For further information about the Maryland Nursing Home Guide please contact: Carol Christmyer, Long-Term Care Quality Initiative, at 410-764-3575.

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