

New Law in Virginia Supports Family Caregivers



Over one million Virginians are caring for older parents, spouses, children with disabilities, friends or other adult loved ones, helping them live independently at home. A new law, the CARE Act, went into effect July 1, 2015 and supports family caregivers.

How will the CARE Act help you?

The law requires hospitals to provide your loved one the opportunity to designate a family caregiver. If you are named as the family caregiver, the hospital is required to:

- ♥ Enter your name, address and phone number in your loved one's medical record;
- ♥ Notify you when your loved one is to be discharged to another facility or back home;
- ♥ Consult with you on your ability to provide the medical tasks you are being asked to perform at home - such as medication management, injections, wound care, and transfers;
- ♥ Offer you a demonstration and explanation, in your native language, of the medical tasks you will need to perform at home and give you time for questions; and
- ♥ Provide you a copy of the discharge plan including contact information about any health care, long-term care, or other community-based services and supports necessary to carry out the discharge plan.

Was the CARE Act followed for your loved one?

Many concerns are best addressed directly with hospital staff, such as a nurse, hospital social worker, or the hospital department devoted to patient concerns. If your concerns are still not resolved, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) works to ensure hospitals are compliant with all state laws. You can file a complaint with VDH via telephone, mail, fax or email. For more information visit: www.vdh.virginia.gov/OLC/Complaint/

- ♥ **Mail:** Complaint Unit, VDH Office of Licensure and Certification, 9960 Mayland Drive, Ste. 401, Henrico, VA 23233-1463
- ♥ **Phone:** 1-800-955-1819 (toll free)
- ♥ **Fax:** 804-527-4503
- ♥ **Email:** OLC-Complaints@vdh.virginia.gov

Being designated as the family caregiver does not obligate you to provide the care, treatment or services described in the discharge plan.

For more information on the CARE Act:

aarp.org/va ♥ aarpva@aarp.org ♥ facebook.com/AARPVirginia ♥ Toll-free: 1-866-542-8164