

## Sunshine Room Guidelines

### Purpose

The purpose of an intensive care room often called a *Sunshine Room* is to provide a safe, monitored environment for a small group of residents who need increased supervision and who will benefit from individualized attention from staff. Typically these are residents who have some form of dementia with unsafe behaviors placing them at a high risk for falls and decreased social interaction. The goal of the Sunshine Room is to enhance the resident's ability to function and to support activities of daily living while meeting their physical needs. The placement of high risk residents in a Sunshine Room may increase social interaction and stimulation as well as reduce falls. In addition, this type of program may decrease the strain on staff that would be caring for these individuals within their normal load of residents.

### Physical Setting

A Sunshine Room may be any room which provides a controlled setting in which staff and residents can interact with space for social interaction as well as individual time. It should be a safe environment which promotes socialization and the highest level of function possible for each individual. It should be furnished with attention to safety while providing a natural, relaxed environment. The amount of stimulation appropriate for the resident's cognitive level should be provided.

### Resident Selection

The selection of a resident for participation in an intensive care room program should be part of an interdisciplinary team process based on nursing observation and assessment, feedback from therapy staff, activities staff input, MDS data, and frontline staff input. Participation should be care planned appropriately with attendance and outcomes monitored closely. A trial period is helpful in determining potential positive and negative outcomes for the resident and other participants. For example, 10 to 12 residents may be selected to participate in an intensive care room program in a 125-bed facility.

### Staffing

Staff for an intensive care room may be within the nursing or activities department. The appointed facilitator must be trained in the provision of individualized activities for residents based on cognitive level. Staff must also be trained in the following areas:

- Safe transfer and ambulation practices
- Safe toileting
- Feeding and hydration
- Activities of daily living
- Infection control
- Use of equipment, seating adaptations, and assistive devices
- Communication skills and behavior management

### Hours of Operation

Ideally the Sunshine Room should be open seven days a week and provide care for 10 to 12 hours each day. How long the participants stay and for what activities will depend upon individual needs and behavior patterns.