

Retirement Home Resident Network Meeting Synopsis

Meeting #2 2023 – February 27 2023

Welcome

The Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority (RHRA) and residents welcomed new members to the Resident Network (RN). RHRA's Vice President, Public Affairs and Policy, notified the RN of an opportunity to participate in a survey that will inform RHRA's new strategic plan.

The Resident Council in Your Home

The RN engaged in a discussion regarding their experience with the Residents' Councils (RC) in their homes. The conversation was resident-led and guided by a set of discussion questions.

Discussion highlights:

Residents provided a background on the makeup and operations of their RC:

- One resident was the President of their council prior to COVID-19. As a result of the pandemic, the RC was in hiatus for two and a half years. The RC returned to full meetings when restrictions were lifted. The biggest challenge during the pandemic was awareness of the council, to make the council relevant, and to keep residents informed (especially new residents). It was an innovative process every day. Their RC fulfilled what they call "business issues" and lacked discussion among residents, which did not give residents a reason to join meetings. This resident suggested RHRA share information through RCs and plans to provide an introduction to RHRA at a future RC meeting. RHRA explained that they are evaluating ways to be in touch with residents, and the more feedback RHRA receives from residents, the more RHRA can provide advice and input to government.
- Another resident explained that their home's RC found out that a RC is not mandatory in retirement homes and decided the council was not needed. Residents in this home have talked about restarting an RC and they are part of a steering committee that is working on putting together a mandate using RHRA's guidelines with language suitable for residents. They are in the stage of looking at membership. The challenge has been physical barriers. Another resident explained that the pandemic challenged them in ways they never expected and suggested in a future RN meeting, members can discuss how they lived through the experience.

- Another resident explained that in 2022, a positive vote for an RC in their home was made. This RC used RHRA resources to help form their council. This RC develops an agenda based on residents' concerns, meets with the Director and Executive Assistant to find solutions, attends all resident meetings with management where they present a written outline of concerns and proposed solutions, and gathers feedback. This resident feels they do not get lots of feedback from residents as there are some barriers to this.
- Another resident explained that their council is called a Residents' Association. They are in touch with residents and get feedback, set agendas, try to find answers to resident questions and their major focus is programming and entertainment. They bring in speakers and fundraise to support entertainment and activities. Their relationship with the administration is cordial and friendly. They do not have a formal complaint process, but they have an Executive Director (ED) who has an open-door policy and meets with a member to find solutions. If there is an issue that people are in arms about, the ED will attend meetings and deal with it directly.

Residents presented the challenges and opportunities their RC encounters and how they deal with them:

- One resident said the biggest challenge was COVID-19. They had Zoom meetings in this situation.
- Another resident said their biggest challenge was communication with other residents and keeping new residents informed during COVID-19. Other challenges included trying to keep people interested and enthusiastic, getting them to join meetings, receiving more than just complaints and making meetings more of a value add for residents. This resident's hope is that the RC meeting format and value add is different than in the past, there is a reason for people to be involved, come to meetings and have a positive attitude. One of the solutions is to speak with the current RC executive. Another resident pointed out that this is a good point because it seems to be resident concerns versus operations; a lot of complaints are operational and do not build communication with residents.
- Another resident explained that the biggest challenge in their home is getting people to attend meetings, getting feedback other than complaints, engaging with people and helping them know where to go for help and assistance. This resident is trying to respect the challenges and find

solutions. They are trying to get the RC to assist residents on a more personal level.

- Another resident said in many ways they are well provided for, but a challenge for them is they worry that their home makes other decisions that affect, but do not match the needs of the residents, for example, healthcare.

Another resident summarized that each residence has a different kind of RC style and approach, but each RC is all about hearing residents' voices, being a venue to express concerns, working with the administration and building resident communities.

Resident Councils and the RHRA

RHRA provided an overview of Residents Councils and RHRA resources.

Questions from the Resident Network:

- Is there a newer version of the RHRA Residents' Council guide?

Closing business

- Proposed discussion topics for upcoming meetings:
 - COVID-19 and adjusting to the new normal
 - RHRA items for feedback
 - Healthcare (including but not limited to COVID-19)
- Questions from the Resident Network:
 - Will the RN meeting recording be available for people to view privately?
 - Could RHRA please consider using a virtual meeting platform with captions?

Action Items for RHRA

- Send a poll with meeting options to the RN.
- RHRA will share resources related to Residents' Councils with the RN.
- RHRA will provide the consultant with the contact information of RN members who are interested in participating in the survey and for those who did not participate in the stakeholder focus group.