

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Reader Questions: A Resident Requests Acupuncture -- Now What?

Question: A post-operative SNF patient and her family want her to have her regular acupuncturist to come provide acupuncture treatments for pain. Does the SNF have to allow the practitioner to come into the facility?

Answer: "It's really up to the facility, which has the power here -- not the resident," says attorney **Neville Bilimoria** in Chicago. "Some SNFs might say, sure, whatever you want to make you or your loved one happy, although the acupuncture has to be provided in a controlled environment with someone supervising to make sure it's safe," he adds.

Consider: If the attending physician agrees it's OK for the patient to receive acupuncture, the facility might look at the acupuncturist's credentials and certification, Bilimoria adds. "If the attending ordered the acupuncture or OK'd it, and the facility had concerns about it or the acupuncture practitioner, the medical director and/or administrator should step in to deal with the issue."