

## Assisted Living Architectural Work Group Update

### New Architectural Review Process for ALR Applications

NY ALFA, represented by Ginger Lynch Landy, Co-Director, has been an active participant in the Department of Health's Assisted Living Architectural Work Group. As you know, the architectural reviews required by the assisted living licensure process came to a halt due to a **lack of DOH architects** to perform the necessary reviews. At the May 25<sup>th</sup> Architectural Work Group meeting, NY ALFA advocated for the Department to establish an **outside architectural certification** as a way to address the pending reviews.

At the November 22<sup>nd</sup> Work Group meeting, the Department reviewed a Dear Administrator Letter (DAL) establishing a policy of **third party architectural certification** as well as a Frequently Asked Questions document (FAQ). If you would like copies of these documents, please give us a call.

The FAQ will now be considered DOH policy, in concert with the DAL, as it clarifies several points of the DAL. NY ALFA submitted several comments and questions that were addressed in the FAQ.

### Occupancy Code Requirements Revisited

At the recent Work Group meeting, there was also an in-depth discussion regarding the appropriate **occupancy classification requirements (I-1/I-2)** for Adult Homes, ALRs, EALRs, and SNALRs. The Work Group discussed implications for a variety of providers from existing adult homes, ALRs and EALRs to new buildings for all licensure categories. A State Fire Code Officer gave a presentation on the building and fire code occupancy classifications and how they apply to 24 hour building uses based on occupant capability (residents' ability to "self preserve", or respond in an emergency). The Work Group discussed the range of resident capabilities in adult care facilities and assisted living, from completely independent, to those in need of assistance to safely respond in an emergency.

There was general agreement that the current I-1 code requirement for adult homes and basic ALRs aligned properly with residents' capability to self preserve. The discussion then centered on whether I-1, I-1+, or I-2 are appropriate for existing buildings applying for EALR and/or SNALR certification. NY ALFA encouraged allowing either I-1+ or I-2.

The Department intends to convene another meeting in January at which time they may suggest revised occupancy requirements for existing buildings, and then address requirements for new buildings applying for EALR/SNALR certification.

Please give Ginger Landy a call at 518-465-8303 if you have any questions or would like additional information.