

Ombudsman Programs for Older Adults in Long-Term Care

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“Ombudsman”

- What does the word “Ombudsman” mean?

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What does “Ombudsman” mean?

- A man who investigates complaints and mediates fair settlements, especially between aggrieved parties such as consumers or students and an institution or organization¹

What does “Ombudsman” mean?

- A government official, especially in Scandinavian countries, who investigates citizens complaints against the government or its functionaries¹



What does “Ombudsman” mean?

- An official, usually appointed by the government but with a significant degree of independence, who is charged with representing the interests of the public by investigating and addressing complaints of maladministration or violation of rights.²

“Ombudsman”

- So, an Ombudsman is...
 - Advocate
 - Investigator
 - Mediator
 - Link between consumers and suppliers
 - Appointed official
 - Consultant

What does an “Ombudsman” do?³

- Advocates for residents of nursing homes, board and care homes, assisted living facilities and similar adult care facilities
- Works with the clients, families, and facility staff to meet the needs and concerns of the residents
- Provides a way to get complaints and concerns heard and resolved
- Commonly referred to in the United States health care system as Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Administration on Aging³

- Ombudsman Program Network:
 - 8,813 Certified Volunteers
 - 1,167 Paid Staff
 - Investigated over 211,937 complaints in 2010

Residents' Rights^{3,4}

- Includes:
 - Nursing Homes
 - Assisted Living Facilities
 - Home Care
 - Hospice
 - Adult Day Care

What concerns does an “Ombudsman” address?³

- Violation of residents' rights
- Physical, verbal, mental abuse
- Poor quality of care
- Improper transfer or discharge
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Any concern about quality of care or life

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program³

- Begun in 1972, under authorization of the Older Americans Act
- Exists in all states
 - including DC, Guam, Puerto Rico
- Each state has an Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Funded by the Federal Government
 - <http://www.aasa.dshs.wa.gov/pubinfo/help/agencies.htm>

Federally Funded Programs^{3,5}

1. National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Resource Center
 - <http://www.ltombudsman.org/>
2. National Association of States Agencies on Aging United for Aging and Disabilities
 - <http://www.nasuad.org/>

Programs

- National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (NASOP)
- National Association of Local Long Term Care Ombudsman (NALLTCO)

State by State

- Virginia – Joani Latimer
- Maryland – Alice H Hedt
- DC – John M Thompson



Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program⁴

- Program Director: Laura J. Nichols
 - Phone: 703-324-5861
 - Email: nvltcop@fairfaxcounty.gov
 - 12011 Government Center Pkwy., Ste 708
Fairfax, Virginia 22035 – 1104
- Toll-Free Number:
- 1-800-552-3402
 - www.elderrightsva.org

How the Process Works

- When should a Physical Therapist advocate access to this service?
- How should a Physical Therapist assist a patient or individual in managing this service?
 - <http://www.elderrightsva.org/solving-long-term-care-problems.aspx>

RED FLAG⁴

- If the problem suggests possible abuse, neglect or exploitation of a resident who is 18 years or older, immediately contact-
 - **Adult Protective Services (APS)**
 - # 1-888-832-3858

Example

- Elder Rights Paralegal Makes a Difference
 - Mary Helen Brainard
- <http://sites.lawhelp.org/documents/321511Seasons%20Plus%20Daily%20News-Record,%209-8-06.pdf>

Resident, Family and Community Education³

- All resource info can be found at the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center
 - www.ltombudsman.org

- Video Examples
 - Residents' Rights for Residents
 - Orientation for Youth: Aging and Nursing Homes

HANDOUTS!!!

References

1. www.thefreedictionary.com
2. www.wikipedia.org
3. www.ltcombudsman.org
4. www.elderrightsva.org
5. www.nasuad.org

The Grande Finale

- Questions???
- Comments???
- Applause???