



## The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program: History, Role and Responsibilities Presenter Notes

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*The notes below serve as background material or a script to supplement the information on the slides. If you have any questions about this presentation, please contact The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) at [ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org) or call 202-332-2275.*

### **Slide 1:**

This presentation provides a general overview of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) highlighting the history, role and responsibilities of the program. Every state has a LTCOP, but each state operates their program differently. Therefore, this presentation will only address the program responsibilities required by federal law so the information is applicable in every state. At the conclusion of this presentation you should have an understanding about what the LTCOP does, who Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (LTCO) represent and how to work with the LTCO.

### **Slide 2:**

First and foremost, a Long-Term Care Ombudsman is a resident advocate. Residents guide all LTCO advocacy and work.

### **Slide 3:**

The nursing home industry experienced rapid growth after the introduction of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965. Complaints about substandard care lead to the realization that the systems in place to protect individuals had failed and improvements in quality of care were needed. In addition to increasing the number of state regulatory inspectors, enhancing the federal enforcement standards and process, the federal government also established the Nursing Home Ombudsman Demonstration grants. Through amendments in the Older Americans Act the responsibilities of the LTCOP continue to expand.

### **Slide 5:**

The primary responsibility of the LTCOP is to serve as the resident advocate. LTCO support resident-centered care and residents guide all LTCO work.

### **Slide 6:**

It is mentioned several times throughout this presentation that Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (LTCO) need resident permission prior to investigating a complaint or referring a complaint to another agency. This is due to the OAA confidentiality requirement. If a resident cannot give consent, the LTCO will speak with the resident's legal representative prior to continuing with a complaint.

### **Slide 7:**

The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is responsible for operating the statewide LTCOP. The LTCOP is designed to be a local, community program utilizing staff and volunteer LTCO to visit residents in their local community. In 2011, there were 574 local programs across the country.

### **Slide 12:**

These are the Top 10 nursing home complaints received by LTCOPs across the country in 2011.

The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) is a program of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (the "Consumer Voice"), funded by a grant from the Administration on Aging (AoA).