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Arkansas LTC Ombudsman

The official newsletter of the Arkansas State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

In touch with Arkansas long-term care residents since 1973.

Long Term Care Ombudsman role with Family Councils:

Create the spark and don't stand away

A family council is an organization run by and for families and friends of nursing home residents.

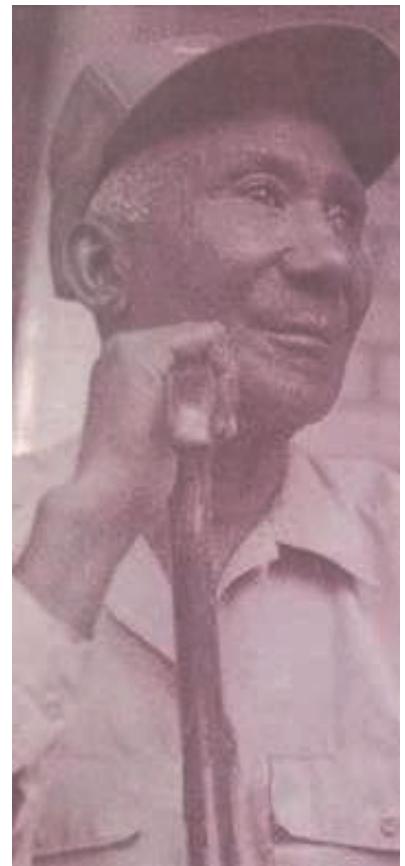
Family council building and development continues to be this year's theme in the Arkansas Long Term Care Ombudsman program. During the 2nd quarterly 2012 training, held on June 29, regional Ombudsmen shared great news about their work on family council development. "I'm working to keep family councils from being a family complaint session, and instead a forum for residents families to come together and learn," said Robyn Moss, one of two Regional Long - Term Care Ombudsmen for Central Arkansas. "Looking to find low cost places to meet outside the facility has been a challenge, so far churches lead the way! But, banks, libraries and parks are an option as well," Said Debbie Medley, Regional

Ombudsman from Western Arkansas. Federal regulations (42 CFR §483.15(c) Participation in Resident and Family Groups) state that staff may attend meetings at the council's invitation, and a private session may create a more proactive discussion for care improvement versus a "complaint session."

"A structure for family input is very important," said Kathie Gately, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

"Hand out index cards and ask the members of the family council to put down the three biggest concerns and compile a group list. This will give a good picture of issues and make sure everyone knows their voice was heard."

"But, we as Long -Term Care Ombudsmen, have to stay engaged and not stand away from the family collaborative effort. Be involved in partnering, and stay in contact with



the family council president."

There are currently 73 working family councils in long-term care facilities in Arkansas.



The Right to Organize Groups

The culture of long-term Care may assert that being a resident in a facility strips a resident of their ability to fulfill their social needs or practice their rights. Contrarily, being a resident of a long-term Care facility creates an additional series of rights even beyond the First Amendment right to peaceable assembly.

A long-term care resident has the right to organize and participate in resident groups in the facility; and a resident's family has the right to meet

in the facility with the families of other residents in the facility;

But to fulfill the sacred rights of the residents, the facility does have a regulated supportive role. The facility must provide a resident or family group, if one exists, with private space and the staff or visitors may attend meetings at the group's invitation.



RESIDENT RIGHTS WATCH

Corner of Action- *Stay informed!*

www.ltcombudsman.org
www.opengovernment.org
www.arombudsman.com

CVO Spotlight:



Shining Diamond

Jamie Mobley, Region II

Certified Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman since 2011

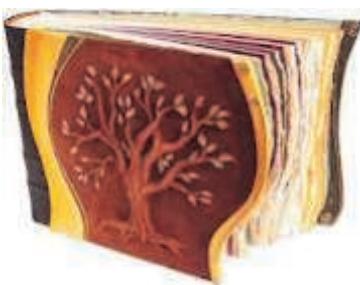
1. What brought you to the Arkansas Volunteer Ombudsman program? I read an ad in a local newspaper searching for volunteers to be Ombudsmen. I have always felt sorry for people that are at the mercy of a care giver. This seemed like an opportunity to do something on behalf of some of those folks right here in my community.

2. What do you enjoy about it? I enjoy appreciation shown by the residents for someone visiting them. They usually don't remember me from one week to the next but that does not bother me. I love to see their faces light up when I knock on their door. Many residents look at me like I've been their best friend forever. I'm always happier when I leave the facility than when I went in.

3. Why should someone be a volunteer Ombudsman? Visiting people that have lost their independence will give anyone with a heart a new outlook on life. When you walk out of a facility realizing that you are healthy and can come and go as you please, turn around and look at that locked door behind you. It could be you some day on the inside looking out.

4. What is the hardest part of being a Volunteer Ombudsman? Finding the extra time is the only hard part of volunteering. I have cried several times because of watching a resident's health decline and some pass away. It goes with the territory.

We thank you Jamie for your time, service and care for our beloved residents.



Hydration: Is that what this is for?

Dehydration is a major cause of hospitalization among the elderly. The aging process makes the body have about 10 percent less water than that of a younger adult's body. The physiological changes associated with aging, like reduced sense of thirst and loss of appetite also cause dehydration in the senior citizens.

Side effects of medications (e.g. diuretics and laxatives) and other medical problems, like high blood sugar (hyperglycemia), diarrhea, infections, and at times, exercise are also causes of dehydration. Very often, the signs of dehydration are mild and vague and are more or less similar to dementia and Alzheimer's symptoms.

Often times in Nursing homes, residents aren't offered something to drink. A, often pink in color, pitcher is sat near or next to them with water in it, sometimes with no dialogue or follow up.

Does the resident know what it is? Has the resident even noticed it?

"Most of those residents don't recognize a container if they didn't use it during their time outside the facility" said Kathie Gately, State Long Term Care Ombudsman, "They may have only owned and used ceramic or stoneware dishes in their earlier years, or maybe they don't recognize the plastic material the hydration containers are made of." Some facilities take measures to make sure residents do recognize their containers. "One facility uses these certain older type cups so the residents have some sort of recognition as to what they are for," said Robyn Moss, Central Arkansas Regional Ombudsman.

The water should be offered to the residents, on a frequent basis.

Questions to ask: What care did the facility provide to reduce risk factors and ensure adequate fluid intake? Did they keep fluid next to the resident and assist or cue them to drink?

Scrapbooks—

Documenting a living legacy of volunteer advocacy.

Having a scrapbook for volunteers during training is a great recruiting tool. It shows appreciation and promotes word of mouth advertising. It allows all volunteers to be involved more personally with their own addition, and it gives current volunteers and potential volunteers a look at the history of the Regional Volunteer Ombudsman Program. It also shines a warm light on the larger state volunteer Ombudsman program as a whole bringing all memories and evidence of hard work together. Be prepared for a possible Blue Ribbon award competition between scrapbooks and display for each region!

Fourth Quarterly Reminders

November 28-30, 2012

Location— Ferncliff resort, Ferndale Arkansas

RSVP by November 16, 2012

Pick your own roommate for the retreat!

Notable quote-

"Did you speak to the resident about their concerns? Who are you advocating for?" - Kathie Gately, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Email Etiquette: How would you like this email?



In an effort to promote efficient and effective communication, the following guidelines are suggested for using email .

1. Get to the point

Be concise. Some folks get over 100 real emails a day that require a response.

2. Be polite and observe your tone of writing.

"Hey Jack" is inappropriate when addressing someone you've never met (or a member of the faculty or staff, unless you have such a relationship). How your email comes across to the reader may determine where it is on the list of priorities, regardless of mandate.

3. Do not ask people to do your work for you

Ask for help only if you've tried to find the information (e.g., via Google) and failed to do so, and your request is not a great imposition. Even then, don't expect that your crisis is somebody else's problem.

4. Attach only large files that are expected

If the recipient isn't expecting a large attachment, ask first and determine if the network will allow it.

5. Need-to-know: Avoid "Reply All"

Use "cc" or "Reply to All" only if the addressed people need to know. Don't spam.

6. Use Bcc (blind copy) when sending large broadcasts

This is less cluttering than using the open-copy feature, discourages "Reply to All," and even makes it more difficult for spammers who steal addresses.

7. Reserve "high priority" for very high priority items

Emergencies are rare.

8. AVOID ALL UPPER CASE and Red Text

Not only is this harder to read, but who wants to be shouted at or warned via email?

9. Include context

Don't assume perfect (or even very good) memory; include enough of previous emails to provide the context for your message. But only quote back what is relevant; indicate where you've edited.

10. Answer previous queries

When you are responding to an earlier email, include the questions and respond to each one; any question you overlook will just require another email cycle.

11. Make the subject line informative

Indicate the specific content in the subject line, include "Ombudsman Sensitive" for all Ombudsman related emails.

12. Read your message before you send it

Sometimes what you think you are typing is not what actually appears on the screen.



Long-Term Care Ombudsman Warm Welcome!!



Joe B Mahorn, CVO
Bobby Ray Hufhines, CVO
KC Lowery, CVO
Lyn Millwood, CVO
Mike Millwood, CVO
Jeanne Albarado, RO
Donna Ernest, RO
Ashli Roussel, CVO
Erin Malec, CVO
Kasey House, CVO
Kohlton Davidson, CVO
Kristen Bay, CVO
LaQilla Boyce, CVO
Carolynn Scott, CVO
Jim Wart, CVO
Kasey Colbern, CVO
Brittani Sarrett, CVO
Tara Fuchs, CVO
Jane Harding, CVO
Kayla Adams, CVO
Lauren Meeker, CVO
Becca Lyle, CVO
Alaina Thompson, CVO
Shhun Hun, CVO
Brigitte Roberts, CVO
Elisabet Kirk, CVO
Rory Eaken, CVO
Meghan Przeczewski, CVO

Carrie DiMaria, CVO
Becca Nicholas, CVO
Carol Anne Wright, CVO
Mary Elizabeth, CVO
Caroline Vick, CVO
Lauren Russell, CVO
Esi Yeboah, CVO
Kingston Malone, CVO
Brittany Wilson, CVO
Dijuana Shelby, CVO
Angie Robertson, CVO
Adam Wallace, CVO
Anna Strock, CVO
Stephanie Skidmore, CVO
Elllie Hammons, CVO
Caitlin Grymes, CVO
Callie Donaldson, CVO
Allison Park, CVO
Christine Miller, CVO
Virginia Tatum, CVO
Letetia M. Brown, CVO
Tonesa Adams, CVO
Shamelisha McClain, CVO
Jacquelyn Gaynor, CVO
Olinza Eddington, CVO
Brittany White, CVO
Kiarra Thorns, CVO
Katherine Bankston, CVO

Brittani McDaniel, CVO
Brenda Waugh, CVO
Lois Gulley, CVO
Juanita Priutt, CVO
Jacqueline Tensley, CVO
Debrra Severson, CVO
Ken Anderson, CVO
Lena Byler, CVO
Jane Miller, CVOC
Claudene Collins, CVO
Allene Higgins, CVO
Cynthia Catyon, CVO
Helen Lee, CVO
Debbie Nolan, CVO
Jeanetta Adams, CVO
Mildred J. Spencer, CVO
Odessa Cash, CVO
Evelyn J. Horton, CVO
Kathlyn Moore, CVO
Bobbie Bradley, CVO
Joetta Edwards, CVO
William C. Taylor, CVO
Faye Hill, CVO
Sybil Williams, CVO
Jann Pittman, CVO
Karen Sawyer, CBUE
Kathy Ball, CVO

Thank you so much for
all you do!





LTC Ombudsmen Encourage Voting:

Tips for Encouraging Residents' Rights to Vote:

- LTC Ombudsmen can help residents obtain voter registration forms and can help residents request absentee ballots.
- LTC Ombudsmen can help residents fill out the required forms for voting.
- LTC Ombudsmen programs can train facility staff on registration and voting.
- LTC Ombudsmen can work with the facility to help residents vote in person either by providing transport to a polling place, facilitating mobile polling or becoming a registered polling place.
- LTC Ombudsmen can coordinate information sessions for residents about the voting process.
- LTC Ombudsmen can coordinate candidate visits to the facility.
- LTC Ombudsmen can take special care to help residents with cognitive impairments.

LTC Ombudsmen can encourage facilities to do any or all of the above and also encourage political participation by some indirect activities:

- LTC Ombudsmen can create and distribute voter guides, brochures and other educational materials about voting rights. View examples of brochures and voter guides on the Consumer Voice website: [Harris County Resident Voter Guide here: http://www.theconsumervoice.org/sites/default/files/nccnhr_HarrisCountyResidentVoterGuide.pdf](http://www.theconsumervoice.org/sites/default/files/nccnhr_HarrisCountyResidentVoterGuide.pdf) and [H-GAC Voting Brochure here: http://www.theconsumervoice.org/sites/default/files/nccnhr/TX-Voting-Brochure.pdf](http://www.theconsumervoice.org/sites/default/files/nccnhr/TX-Voting-Brochure.pdf)
- LTC Ombudsmen can remind facility staff and residents about the proximity of important deadlines like the last day of registration and the last day to request an absentee ballot.

Arkansas Facilities Encouraging Residents' Rights to Vote

Voter turnout among institutionalized populations is much lower than among non-institutionalized populations. Facilities can be instrumental in encouraging residents to exercise their right to vote. Each facility has slightly different policies and procedures, but these tips can be useful for all facilities.

Best Practices for Facilities:

- Provide information on upcoming elections and candidates
- Distribute sample ballots prior to elections so residents are familiar with voting procedures
- Post reminders about voter registration deadlines
- Share tip sheets on how to register to vote, qualify to vote and vote early.





National L.T.C. Ombudsman News

THE WHITE HOUSE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement from Secretary Sebelius on the Administration for Community Living

All Americans – including people with disabilities and seniors – should be able to live at home with the supports they need, participating in communities that value their contributions – rather than in nursing homes or other institutions.

The Obama administration and my department have long been committed to promoting community living and finding new mechanisms to help ensure that the supports people with disabilities and seniors need to live in the community are accessible.

Today, with the creation of the new Administration for Community Living (ACL), we are reinforcing this commitment by bringing together key HHS organizations and offices dedicated to improving the lives of those with functional needs into one coordinated, focused and stronger entity.

The Administration for Community Living will bring together the Administration on Aging, the Office on Disability and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities into a single agency that supports both cross-cutting initiatives and efforts focused on the unique needs of individual groups, such as children with developmental disabilities or seniors with dementia. This new agency will work on increasing access to community supports and achieving full community participation for people with disabilities and seniors.

The Administration on Community Living will seek to enhance and improve the broad range of supports that individuals may need to live with respect and dignity as full members of their communities. These support needs go well beyond health care and include the availability of appropriate housing, employment, education, meaningful relationships and social participation. Building on President Obama's Year of Community Living, the ACL will pursue improved opportunities for older Americans and people with disabilities to enjoy the fullest inclusion in the life of our nation.

For more information, please visit <http://hhs.gov/acl>



Arkansas State Long Term Care Ombudsman Newsletter

Arkansas State Long Term Care
Ombudsman Program
P.O. Box 1437, Slot S530
Little Rock, AR 72209-1437

Telephone: 501-682-8952

Receiver Address

Mission Statement

The mission of the Arkansas Ombudsman Program is to assure that long-term care facility residents have the right to live their lives harmoniously and with dignity, feeling free to voice complaints or concerns without reprisal.

The Ombudsman strives to be a trusted advocate for all residents by educating them regarding their rights; empowering residents to speak for themselves; while providing advocacy for those without a voice.

Through regular visitations the Ombudsman seeks to enhance the quality of life for long term care residents by the investigation of complaints and interacting with both residents and staff to facilitate the resolution of the problems.

VISIT US ON THE WEB
WWW.AROMBUDSMAN.COM



Message from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Kathie J. Gately

Often, I am approached with the age old question that all LTC Ombudsmen receive, “What is an Ombudsman” “What do you do?” “What type of services can I receive?” As we all know, the LTC Ombudsman Program is not one comprised of tangible services that individuals can see and touch. The service that an LTC Ombudsman provides to our most valuable and vulnerable citizens is priceless. LTC Ombudsmen hold true the vision that our founding father, Dr. Arthur S. Fleming, perceived – we are The Advocate for those who do not have a voice, who feel forgotten, alone and helpless. Regional LTC Ombudsmen educate and empower individuals residing in nursing homes, residential care and assisted living facilities to be involved in their care, to speak up, and to know that they matter. If an individual is not able to, a LTC Ombudsman becomes their voice. Our Certified Volunteer LTC Ombudsmen excel at visiting individuals on a weekly basis, ensuring that they are kept informed, cared for and not forgotten by their communities. Mother Teresa said it best...

“Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody,

I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat.”

You can feed me, cloth me and shelter me, but if I no longer matter than I might as well not exist. Well over 14,000, both paid and volunteer, LTC Ombudsmen around the state and nation provide the ultimate service – giving individuals back their will to live, to thrive and be an active part of their life!