Sexual Expression and Intimacy in Long-Term Care Facilities

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May 31, 2023
Welcome

- Virtual Office Hours are informal, monthly calls on specific topics
- Opportunity to learn from your peers and receive technical assistance
- Unmute yourself to ask questions via audio, or type your question in the chat
- This call is not being recorded
- Certificates of participation are not provided because registration is not required
- Links to resources will be posted in the chat box and will be posted to the NORC website - ltcombudsman.org.
- Ideas for topics? Email ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org
- NOTE: Today’s call will contain explicit language about sex and intimacy.
Resources
Earlier this year, Consumer Voice was joined by Patty Ducayet, Texas State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, to explore the complex issues surrounding the ability to consent to sexual activity among long-term care residents and supporting a resident’s right to intimacy and sexual expression.

Listen on Consumer Voice’s website, Apple Podcasts, SoundCloud, YouTube, or Spotify.

https://theconsumervoice.org/pursuingquality
Visit the NORC website for more information and resources on sexuality and intimacy in long-term care.

Ombudsman Program Examples: State-by-State Information

- Visit NORC’s Ombudsman Program Examples page for information on specific state policies and guidelines around sexuality and intimacy in long-term care.

- https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/program-examples#sexuality

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<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions and Answers Related to Resident Sexual Activity</td>
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<td>Investigative Guidelines: Resident Intimacy and Sexual Behavior</td>
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<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Sexual Expression Policy Development: A Guide for Long-Term Care Facilities and Assisted Living Programs (December 2016)</td>
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<td>Capacity to Consent to Sexual Expression in Long-Term Care (2016)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sexual Expression in Long-Term Care</td>
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<td>Sexuality and Aging Fact Sheet (2015)</td>
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Available on the Consumer Voice website, this fact sheet outlines types and signs of sexual abuse, an overview of resident rights and an action plan for staff if they suspect sexual abuse is occurring.

ASA Blogs

Daniel Reingold of RiverSpring Living writes an important piece on the still-nascent but evolving sexual expression policies in long-term care in *The Times They Are A-Changin’ (Finally!)*.

[https://generations.asaging.org/times-they-are-changin-finally](https://generations.asaging.org/times-they-are-changin-finally)

Boston-based researchers Nathalie Huitema and Maggie Syme present *The Sexual Consent Potential Model* based upon an empowering view of sexual consent for people with dementia.

[https://generations.asaging.org/sexual-consent-potential-model](https://generations.asaging.org/sexual-consent-potential-model)
Dialogue: Your Experiences

Let’s share your background on this topic and questions you have for your peers.
What are some common concerns or myths you’ve heard about sexual expression and intimacy in long-term care facilities?

For example: Residents are not interested in sexual expression. If a resident has dementia, they cannot consent to engage in a romantic relationship.
Has it been brought to your attention that a resident wanted to engage in sexual intimacy?

Did the resident ask for your help facilitating a sexual encounter, such as securing a private room or obtaining materials with sexually explicit content: books, magazines, film, etc.?
What is the facility’s role in upholding and facilitating resident sexual expression? Including providing sensitive staff training to ensure the resident’s right to privacy, safe and healthy sexual expression, and protecting residents from sexual harassment and abuse?

Share something good that a facility has done to support residents’ sexual expression.
How do you support a resident’s right to sexual expression when the resident has a roommate, or their partner does not live in the facility?

What is the Ombudsman program’s role?
Do you think residents feel comfortable talking to staff about these issues?

If not, what are some ways you think staff can make them feel more comfortable?
Share an example of an effective policy or protocol you’ve seen a facility implement for determining if someone who has a cognitive impairment is able to consent to sexual intimacy?

How is sexual consent capacity determined?

What should facility policies address regarding sexual consent?
What is the role of family and others?

Have you encountered a situation where staff members notified a family member of a resident’s sexual activity. If so, why?

When should a resident’s physician be notified of sexual activity?
Have you encountered a situation in which a resident engages in consensual sexual activity with someone other than their spouse?

Should staff intervene? What role do you play in those conversations?
Do you have any other suggestions for facilities, staff, or Ombudsmen that would improve the way a resident’s right to sexual expression is upheld?
Join NORC’s Email List

Join NORC’s email list to receive the quarterly *Ombudsman Outlook*, training opportunities, and resources.

Visit [ltcombudsman.org/sign-up](http://ltcombudsman.org/sign-up).
Connect with us!

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- ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org
- The National LTC Ombudsman Resource Center
- @LTCombudcenter

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This project was supported, in part, by grant number 90OMRC0002-01-00, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.