
Successful Communication During COVID-19

May 11, 2021
Welcome!

- Use the Q&A feature for questions for the speakers.

- Use the chat feature to submit comments or respond to questions from speakers or other attendees.

- Please complete the evaluation questionnaire when the webinar is over.
Have a question? Use the Q&A or Chat box.

**Question & Answer**

The Q&A window allows you to ask questions to the host and panelists. They can either reply back to you via text in the Q&A window or answer your question live.

1. Click Q&A to open the Q&A window.
2. Type your question into the Q&A box. Click **Send**.

**Chat**

The in-meeting chat allows you to send chat messages to and send a message to the host, panelists, and attendees (if permitted).

1. Click **Chat** to open the in-meeting chat.
2. The chat will appear on the right side of your Zoom window if you are not in full screen. If you are in full screen, it will appear in a window that you can move around your screen as needed.
3. To change who you are chatting with, click the drop down beside **To**:
   - Select **All panelists and attendees**.
4. Type your message and press **Enter**.
Speakers

Patty Ducayet is the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman for Texas. She has served in the position since 2007 and previously served as an ombudsman in Dallas County. She has a Bachelor’s degree in social work from the University of Texas and a Master’s degree in social work from the University of Denver. She loves to travel and eagerly awaits the chance to travel outside of the U.S. again soon.

Shazia Sultan is Managing Local Ombudsman in Brazos Valley region which includes Bryan/College Station area, the home of the Texas Aggies. Shazia received her MPH degree from Texas A&M, School of Public Health in 2015. She started her career as a volunteer with Brazos Valley Council of Governments that same year, became a Certified Marketplace Navigator, Benefits Counselor, Staff Ombudsman and has been the Managing Local Ombudsman since 2018. She is mom of two teenagers, 18 and 14, enjoys reading poetry and watching craft videos.

Heidi L'Esperance is Regional LTC Ombuds for Snohomish County, north of Seattle. After moving to the beautiful Pacific Northwest in 2017, Heidi became a Certified LTCO Volunteer. Heidi was offered the position of Snohomish-King County Long-Term Care Staff Ombuds February 2018. In October 2018, Snohomish County and King County became two separate regions; she became the Regional for Snohomish County.

Facilitator: Carol Scott, Ombudsman Specialist, National Ombudsman Resource Center
Poll Question 1

Which of the following have you done during the COVID-19 pandemic (select all that apply)?

- Window visit
- Outdoor visit
- Wrote a letter or email to a resident
- Spoke with a resident by phone or video call
- Spoke with a family member by phone or video call
- Participated in a Family Council meeting (virtually)
- Participated in a Resident Council meeting (virtually)
- Provided community education outreach virtually (e.g., Facebook live, Zoom)
- Participated in a car parade
Communication Tips

• Communication with Residents
  ▪ Contact residents and family members that were complainants in recent cases (prior to the visitation restrictions)

• Long-Term Care Facility Staff
  ▪ Coordinate with the facility to identify a staff person for you to contact on a regular basis.

• Resident Representatives, Families, and the Public
  ▪ Ensure your website has current information.
  ▪ Create a poster or flyer with information about the program, post it on the front entrance of the facility.

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/communication
Poll Question 2

Have you resumed indoor visits with residents?

- Yes
- No
Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak

Updated April 2021

• Preparing and Arriving for a Visit

• Cleaning and Sanitizing During and Between Visits

• Protecting Yourself and Others

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry
Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic (updated May 2021 and available as a PDF, fillable PDF, and word document)

Task #12
Be prepared that residents will feel different emotions in reaction to the pandemic, isolation, and loss.

Description
Emotions displayed may include sadness, grief, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, great excitement for having visitors, etc.

Example
Spend time listening to the residents. Be an attentive empathetic listener.

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry
### Understanding Trauma and Ensuring Person-Centered Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/webinars#four

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<th>Webinars and Free Online Training for Administrators, Direct Care Staff, and Family Members</th>
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- Webinars and Materials: https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/training-series

- Online Courses and Quizzes: https://consumervoice.mrooms.net/course/index.php?categoryid=10
Tips for Ombudsman Program Communication with Residents, Long-Term Care Facilities, Families, and the Public During COVID-19

Tips for Facility Visits During an Infectious Disease Outbreak - Updated April 2021

Visit Checklist During the COVID-19 Pandemic - Updated May 2021

Tips for Communicating While Wearing a Mask

Taking Care of You

https://ltcombudsman.org/omb_support/COVID-19/recovery-and-reentry
Free Cell Phones

Lifeline Assistance is an FCC-mandated (Federal Communications Commission), government-sponsored program that helps the financially disadvantaged receive a cell phone at no cost to them.


This page has links for all states to find out who is eligible and where the phones can be accessed:

https://www.freegovernmentcellphones.net/states
Successful Communication During COVID-19

Patty Ducayet, Texas State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Texas

- 1,210 nursing facilities
- 2,029 assisted living facilities
- 100 staff ombudsmen
- ~200 volunteer ombudsmen reporting in 2021
COVID-19 State Office Activities

PPE Procurement
Policy Development and Training
Weekly Communications
• All staff calls, Tuesdays
• All manager call, Thursdays
• 30 minute weekly oral and written briefings
• State survey agency ALF and NF webinars
• Facebook Live Q&A
Volunteer Activity
If they are not visiting a facility
An Effort by the Texas Ombudsman Program to Connect with Residents
Virtual Contact--it’s as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Collect resident contact information.
2. Find out how and when a resident wants to visit with you.
3. Call residents on that schedule!
Preparing for a Call

• Dress for success, if a video call.
• Make sure your device is ready.
• Choose a quiet, confidential place.
• Silence any device that may go off during your meeting.
• Position your camera:
  • Eye level
  • Proper lighting
  • Background
Making the First Call

- Start slowly.
- Introduce yourself in simple terms.
- Listening is your primary goal.
- Establish trust.
- Don’t immediately ask if they have complaints.

Reminder: Ombudsman consent and confidentiality policies apply!
Engage residents and build rapport with questions like:

- How are you?
- What’s a typical day like for you?
- What is something that made you smile this week?
- What activities do you like to do?
- What do you do to keep busy?
- What did you used to do for work?
- Tell me about where you grew up and what it was like.
- Do you have a big family?
COVID-19 Ombudsman Timeline

Late July – cases in Texas facilities surge in first wave
Aug 2020 Reentry Plan Release, Outdoor Visits Allowed
Sept 2020 Indoor Visits Allowed, Volunteer Ombudsmen permitted
Late Dec – resident vaccinations began as cases in Texas facilities surge in a second wave
Apr 2021 Ombudsman Visit Required – 1 per facility by Jun 30
Facebook Presence

- Weekly 30 minute Q&A began May 2020
- COVID-19 resources aimed at providers
- Content for residents and family members/friends
- Changing to once every two weeks
- Will pivot to council support and education
For a copy of the Resident Contact presentation, email us at ltc.ombudsman@hhs.texas.gov
Successful Communication During COVID-19

SHAZIA SULTAN
MANAGING LOCAL OMBUDSMAN
BRAZOS VALLEY AREA AGENCY ON AGING
Purpose

• In-person visitation restrictions
  • No on-site facility visits from March 2020 to August 2020

• Ensure Ombudsman Access
  • Used other means to connect with residents, family members, and facilities
Communication Methods

- Print Materials
- Videos
- Phone Calls
- Outdoor Visits
- Indoor Visits
- Cards
- Emails
Contact Us

Do You Have a Concern?
Ask Your Questions

If you have a concern or question, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program can help. Contact an ombudsman:
- Local: Area Agency on Aging of Brazos Valley
  800-994-4000, option 4
- Online: apps.care.gov/

Contact Your Ombudsman:
Sheena Sutton & George Balazs
Phone: 1-877-977-2676
Email: sheena.sutton@livesetter.org;
george.balazs@livesetter.org
Learn more about the Ombudsman Program: https://apps.care.gov

TIPS
For Getting Good Care

1. Ask your questions.
2. Keep your records.
3. Talk with your family.
4. Use your rights.
5. Watch for changes.

Protecting Residents' Rights

Contact us:
800-994-4000

Resources for residents and their families:
1. Local: Area Agency on Aging of Brazos Valley
2. Online: apps.care.gov/
3. National: Ombudsman Resource Center
4. State: Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
Information & Assistance

Balancing Privacy & Protection: Surveillance Cameras in Nursing Home Residents' Rooms

FACT SHEET

State Law & Guidelines on Surveillance Cameras in Nursing Home Residents' Rooms

For Medicaid-eligible residents of a nursing or assisted living facility and their family members

Long-term care residents' Medicaid and stimulus checks 2020

Will a stimulus check affect a resident's Medicaid eligibility? The IRS defines the stimulus check as a tax rebate that will not be counted as income or resources if it is spent within 12 months from receipt. If funds remain unspent after 12 months, the unspent funds will be counted as a resource. Medicaid is actuarially extended for all current Medicaid-eligible individuals. Anyone who currently has benefits will not be denied during this period. Medicaid spending rules still apply as these funds will be calculated in a "look-back period". Keep all receipts of expenses, especially for purchases over $200.

Will the stimulus check count as applied income? No. As a tax rebate, the individual stimulus check will not be calculated as applied income in a nursing facility or copayment or room and board in an assisted living facility. A person's applied income or copayment amount will not be changed by the stimulus check.

Questions?
Contact the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at 800-252-2431 or ltc.ombudsman@hhce.state.tx.us.

This information is provided by the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program who are advocates for long-term care residents.

Taking Care of You
Tips for Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities

For Self-Care

- REVIEW THE MEDICATIONS AND DOSE
- REVIEW THE NUTRITION
- REVIEW THE EXERCISES
- REVIEW THE SELF-HYGIENE
- REVIEW THE NURSING HOME SERVICES

For Others

- REVIEW THE MEDICATIONS AND DOSE
- REVIEW THE NUTRITION
- REVIEW THE EXERCISES
- REVIEW THE SELF-HYGIENE
- REVIEW THE NURSING HOME SERVICES
Staying Connected

Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program wishes you
Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year

May the holidays end the present year on a cheerful note
and make way for a fresh and bright new year.

Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program
Long-term care ombudsmen are advocates for resident
rights. We help protect the quality of life and quality of
care of anybody who lives in a nursing home or an
assisted living facility. Services are free and confidential.

Contact Us
Brazos Valley Area Agency on Aging
3991 E 29th St., Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-994-4000

The Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program
wishes you
A Happy Valentine’s Day

Connection to family, to friends, to the community, and to your
Ombudsman is an essential component of good health and
quality of life for residents. Your Ombudsman is here for you.

Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program
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3991 E 29th St., Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-994-4000
### Connection With Residents & Families

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- **Video Calls:** Virtual Tours, Resident/Family Council, Care Plans
- **Phone Calls:** Discharge Fair Hearings, Reassurance Calls, Complaints
- **Emails:** Information & Assistance, Resources, Complaints
- **Facility Visits:** Window Visits, Outdoor, Indoor
OUTDOOR VISIT
August 2020
Conversation with Residents

- Introduction
- How Are You?
- Are Your needs being met?
- Do staff respond to call light promptly
- Have you noticed any changes that concern you?
- Have you been able to communicate with your family or friends?
Connection with Facility Staff

- Regular Contact and Check-in staff
- Mailed and Delivered Print Materials
- Facility Staff to establish video calls
- Emails for Information and Assistance
- Staff to address complaints
Communication with Public

- Local Newspaper
  - Interview Article & PSAs
- Local Radio
  - Interview
- Social Media
  - Volunteer’s Story
- Printed Material
  - Volunteer Recruitment Flyers
Meet Javier. Javier is a Certified Volunteer Long-Term Care Ombudsman who has served residents of nursing and assisted living facilities since 2017. He volunteers in Brazos County. Javier explains, “A greeting, a smile, a kind gesture will never be replaced by a virtual platform. We will look for ways to adapt to COVID-19 because we all pursue a common goal, the well-being of residents.” Read Javier’s story at this link https://bit.ly/2Qhi8t5.
Recruitment Flyer

YOU
CAN HELP PROTECT
residents’ rights, health
and well-being.
Be an ombudsman.

Residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities can face abuse, neglect and exploitation. To make matters worse, they often have no one in their corner to stand up for them.

Ombudsmen advocate for residents’ rights. They help protect the quality of life and quality of care of anyone who lives in these long-term care facilities.

To be a volunteer ombudsman, you must
• Be at least 18 years old
• Have no conflicts of interest
• Complete certification training
• Have transportation

Volunteer teams are flexible, and no experience is required. Volunteers receive
• Free 30-hour certification course
• Ongoing support
• On-site experience during a three-month internship
• Continuing education

For more information:
800-252-2412
hc.ombudsman@thoo.state.tx.us
info.ombudsman@brazos.org

Local program contact:
Shazia Batool Sultan
979-395-3804 | shazia.sultan@bvcog.org

BRAZOS VALLEY OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The Brazos Valley Ombudsman Program serves Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, and Washington counties. We provide free and confidential ombudsman services to 29 nursing homes and 22 assisted living facilities.

A strong volunteer force helps us ensure that every resident has a voice. We need passionate and committed people in all seven counties, who can help us achieve our goal of high quality of life and care for residents in the nursing and assisted living facilities we serve.

We provide on-site and virtual training to complete initial Certification Training and continuing education. Certified Ombudsmen Volunteers are assigned to a facility, make a direct contact with residents, family members, and facility staff, and work independently on a flexible schedule.

Volunteers receive support from local staff Ombudsmen and the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Contact Us:
Brazos valley Area Agency on Aging
Brazos Valley Council of Governments
2991 E 13th St.
Bryan, TX 77802
1-800-946-5000
www.bvgco.org
Ensuring the dignity, rights and well being of individuals living in long-term care, today and tomorrow.
Washington State LTCOP

- Washington State (7.6+ million pol.)
  - 4,229 Facilities
  - Over 75,063 licensed beds

- 14 Regions

- 159 Volunteer Certified Ombuds
  (50 percent decrease due to COVID)

- 24 FTE Staff
  (56% of National Average, as recommend by the Institute Of Medicine study of 1 FTE to 2000 residents)

- 1 State Office (4 FTEs)
With an estimated population of 822,083 as of 2019, it is the third-most populous county in Washington, after nearby King and Pierce counties, and the 75th-most populous in the United States.
Snohomish County LTCOP

Snohomish County currently has:

- 686 Facilities
- 8310 licensed beds
  - SNF: 18 facilities/1635 beds
  - ALF: 45 facilities/3161 beds
  - AFH: 623 facilities/3514 beds
- 7 Certified Volunteers
- 5 additional volunteers currently in certification training
- 2 Full-Time Staff (includes RLTCO)
  - 1 Part-Time Staff Ombuds (29- hours week)
Remote Advocacy Due to Covid-19

- Phone Calls
- Mailings
- Zoom Meetings
- Conference Calls
Advocacy By Phone

- Program Initiation:
  - Requested Facility Census
    - Resident and Residents’ Representative name and contact information
    - Called residents and families

- Complaint/Case Resolution
  - Facilities/staff (phone, zoom, conference call, email)
  - Supporting/Regulatory Agencies (RCS, APS, HCS) etc.
Phone Advocacy Barriers

- Barriers:
  - Obtaining the census timely from the facility
  - Facility not answering the phone.
    - Inability to reach the resident
  - “Cold Calls”
    - Unsure of resident or family reception
    - Residents ability to communicate
    - Unsuccessful reply to VM messages
  - Trusting the efficacy of remote advocacy
Barrier Resolution Strategies

- At least 2 meetings monthly.
- Zoom Meetings
- Used the “merge-call” feature for training purposes.
- Developed a “Calling Best Practices” script
- Webinars
- Mailings
- Communication of State Regulations related to COVID and LTC.
- Variety of guest speakers
- Role Played case scenarios
- Shared remote advocacy success stories
Advocacy By Mail

- Summer 2020: Postcard Project
  - Volunteers helped put packets together
    - Postcards (Consumer Voice Template)
    - Letter from RLCO introducing program
    - Letter from State Ombuds
    - WAC 365-18-100 (Access) and WAC 365-18-120 (Interference)
  - AFH Census
    - Mailed over 630 packets (7,000+ cards)

- Ongoing Mailing Project
  - Handwritten cards/notes
  - Brochures/Business cards
Remote Advocacy Makes A Difference

The Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program has been busy during the pandemic reaching out to long-term care residents by letter, phone, and postcard. Hear from three committed ombuds who share what it’s been like during the state emergency.

[https://www.waombudsman.org/](https://www.waombudsman.org/)
USING THE CMS GUIDANCE TO OPEN NURSING HOME DOORS

Description
In this conversation with Robyn Grant and Jocelyn Bogdan of Consumer Voice, learn about how residents, families, and advocates can use guidance from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to facilitate in-person visitation. While the new guidance expands visitation, many residents and families still have questions and concerns. After providing a brief overview of the CMS guidance, we discuss several of the most common issues, including strategies and tips for applying the guidance to help open nursing home doors. This conversation also covers the recent guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that limits when residents should be quarantined.

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Listen to past episodes on Apple Podcasts, SoundCloud, Facebook, or our website.

Share Your Story
This page includes the stories shared with us of good care without drugs as shared by long-term care residents, family members, and friends advocating to prevent the misuse of antipsychotic drugs in their nursing home and ensuring they receive quality long-term care.

Tell us about your, or your loved one’s, experiences of good care without drugs in a long-term care facility. Share your story.

Connect with us:

www.ltcombudsman.org
ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org

Get our app! Search for "LTC Ombudsman Resource Center" in the Apple Store or Google Play

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