

MESSAGE FROM THE STATE OMBUDSMAN



Leigh Davis
State Ombudsman
Florida Department of Elder Affairs

Happy Fall everyone! It has been an active quarter. Many different topics have been addressed, and ideas have been implemented as we move forward with our program. Additionally, in passing new ombudsman legislation last year, the legislature has clarified the scope of the program's advocacy.

Our State face-to-face quarterly meeting was held in Altamonte Springs in September. Secretary Verghese attended, thanked the State Council for their service, and answered a variety of questions. The Council elected Hanna Fink of the Broward Council as their new State Chair, and Mary Darling of the Withlacoochee Council accepted the Vice-Chair position. The Council welcomed new State Representative Kathy Moore of the South Dade and Florida Keys Council and Georgina 'Gina' Cooper as an At-Large Member to the team. The State Council needs one more At-Large Member so if you know someone you believe can make a contribution to the State Council encourage them to request and submit an application.

There have been many challenging cases this quarter and many "happy endings." I commend all ombudsmen staff and volunteers for their outstanding resident advocacy and collaboration with agency, community, and facility partnerships throughout the state.

October is here and we all know it is nationally recognized as Residents' Rights month which is always a very active and fun month for our Councils. Special fun events are planned in facilities and communities across the state to celebrate this month. It is a very valuable opportunity to not only educate our communities on the specific set of rights given to residents when they enter long-term care facilities but also the services available through the Ombudsman Program and our team of volunteers. When individuals move into a long-term care facility such as a nursing home, assisted living facility, or adult family-care home, they gain a special set of rights in addition to those they maintain as a United States citizen. Educating residents, loved ones, and staff on these rights helps promote a more safe and healthy atmosphere for our residents.

Thank you again to all staff and volunteers for your hard work. We must work as a team to accomplish the difficult tasks we are charged with.




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State Council Meeting in Altamonte Springs

The State Council met in September in Altamonte Springs for their quarterly face-to-face meeting. This meeting was extremely productive with a visit from Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Secretary Verghese, the election of a new State Council Chair, and the brainstorming that took place after the workgroups had met to prioritize the topics to present to the Council. Lively discussion ensued, and valuable information was shared. Better ways to advocate for our residents resulted from these intense, face-to-face brainstorming sessions.

The Advocacy Workgroup Chair Lauren Eiel spoke on the consent form and the Spanish questionnaire. Chair Rich Newton gave an update on the Data and Information Workgroup and development of data, along with pulling data to illustrate that assisted living facilities have changed in character over the year. The concern is that staff requirements for assisted living facilities are not changing to meet the needs of the residents. The Training and Education Workgroup Chair Gloria Goodman communicated on the transmittal of continuing education opportunities and about the revised module trainings. Chair Mary Darling of the Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Workgroup discussed success in locating trade shows the ombudsmen can attend for recruiting purposes and free advertising on radio stations. The group is attempting to address communication issues with hearing-impaired residents.

DOEA Secretary Verghese joined the State Council for a meet and greet. He fielded several questions from the State Council regarding funding, guardianship, limited mental health services, staffing for assisted living facilities, and ombudsmen lobbying their individual local representatives. After speaking on several different topics, Secretary Verghese and State Ombudsman Leigh Davis presented Joan Rixom with the Ombudsman Volunteer of the Year Award and the Hinds Award. The Hinds award is a national award that honors an individual who has effectively advocated for long-term care consumers at the local level. The Awards Luncheon is November 6, 2015, in Arlington, Virginia. Congratulations Joan! We are so lucky to have you as a Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman!

Hanna Fink (Broward Council) and Mary Darling (Withlacoochee Council) both gave tremendous candidacy speeches for the State Council Chair position, and it was very clear that the State Council would be in a win-win situation regardless of who was elected the new State Chair. Though the race was exceptionally close, ultimately, Hanna Fink won the election for State Chair. Hanna Fink accepted her appointment and immediately requested Mary Darling as her Vice-Chair. Mary Darling accepted. Dr. Pargman has completed two terms as State Chair, but will complete his term as the Panhandle State Representative and continue to be a valuable and respected certified ombudsman.



Group photo with Secretary Verghese



Leigh Davis & Secretary Verghese



Joan Rixom

Hanna Fink & Dr. Pargman



New Vice-Chair Mary Darling & State Chair Hanna Fink



Ombudsman Receives National Recognition

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care has announced Joan Rixom has been selected to receive the Howard Hinds Memorial Award. The Hinds Award was established in 2005 in memory of the late Howard Hinds, a Tennessee District Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Howard was a true champion for residents and for the ombudsman program, as well as a passionate advocate on national issues. The award honors an individual who has effectively advocated for long-term care consumers at the local level. The Awards Luncheon is during the 39th Annual Conference in Arlington, Virginia, on November 6, 2015. Congratulations Joan, for the National exposure to the Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Joan shares why she became a volunteer. "I became an ombudsman because all of my life I have been associated with caring: as an older child, a mother, a nurse, a teacher of nursing, and an education director. When I retired, we built a home we designed. After that, I was stuck with housework!!! I realized I had a background that could be used to continue to provide caring, so I became an ombudsman. This is basically why I continue to be in the program. I can give what is most valuable to the elderly: time, time to listen, to help, to recognize past lives and experiences, to attest that the elderly have contributed more than they are usually credited with, and give a sense of dignity at a time they may feel deprived of it. This may sound flowery, but in fact, we all need this feeling and the elderly most often are the ones most in need of this caring. Anyone can give money (small or large amounts) but giving time is more valuable and personally satisfying."

Walk to End Alzheimer's

Over 5 million people in the United States are living with Alzheimer's disease, and over the next several years, that number is expected to triple. An estimated \$226 billion will be spent on caring for those with Alzheimer's and dementia this year alone.

On September 19th at Cascades Park in Tallahassee, walkers began a two-mile walk to raise money and walk for the cause. Therese Schroer, Donna Sims, Pam Damitz, and Taroub King from the Department of Elder Affairs joined the community to Walk to End Alzheimer's. Therese and Donna both work for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, and we thank them for their participation to such a great cause. "There has never been a greater need for the people of Tallahassee to join in the fight against Alzheimer's disease by participating in the Walk to End Alzheimer's," said Kay Redington, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, Central and North Florida Chapter. "The money we raise goes towards critically-needed research and free support services the Association provides to our community in the greater Tallahassee area. Currently, there is no treatment or cure for Alzheimer's disease; and there are just under 6,000 people in greater Tallahassee living with Alzheimer's or related dementias. These numbers are alarming, but we know that research is our best course in finding a cure. These walks support essential funding needed to give scientists and researchers the chance to succeed," she states. Organizers stated that 55 teams and nearly 500 walkers combined to raise more than \$50,000 to combat the disease.



Therese Schroer, Pamela Damitz, Jeff Johnson, Taroub King, and Donna Sims

Volunteer Appreciation

West Coast DOM Annette Perry plans many activities for her volunteers and staff. They do their best to get together once a month to have fun and bond! Activities include concerts, movies in the park, Grand Prix, baseball games, and a quarterly cook-out at Annette's home where the volunteers enjoy swimming, shuffle board, games, laughter, and building team spirit. Annette feels this helps her council feel more comfortable with contacting each other for advice or help on a case. She feels having a "volunteer buddy" is very important because this work is so individualized and most work is done alone. Having a buddy that shares your same interests and you can stay in touch with besides the monthly meeting or ombudsman work helps to develop friendships that will last a life time. It is these extra events that keep her volunteers working together as a happy team to advocate for our residents.



Sue Boone and Linda Libecap



Importance of Assessments

Yearly assessments conducted by ombudsmen in each long-term care facility across the State of Florida are an integral part of our program. These assessments are comprehensive in nature, must be resident-centered, and must focus on factors affecting residents' rights, health, safety, and welfare. Advance notice does not need to be provided so the ombudsman may observe the facility, staff, and residents in a normal, everyday setting. Upon entering the facility, the ombudsman will identify himself or herself to the administrator or designee. This assessment is not to interfere in any way with the programs or activities of the residents or pose an unreasonable burden on the long-term care facility. The ombudsman will take great care in being respectful of both staff and residents. They will request permission before entering a resident's room and politely ask if they may speak with the resident to determine their opinion of the facility, their care, and their interaction with staff. Upon completion of this assessment, the ombudsman will meet with the administrator or designee to conduct an exit interview. At this time, the ombudsman will discuss any issues observed concerning residents' rights, health, safety, and welfare. If needed, the ombudsman will recommend areas in need of improvement or any safety issues noticed with the condition of the facility that need to be addressed. The ombudsman will inform the administrator if a follow-up visit will be performed. An on-site administrative assessment may not be accomplished by forcible entry. However, if entry is denied to an ombudsman in performance of official duty, the administrator of the facility is to be reported and may face disciplinary action by the Agency for Health Care Administration.



FLORIDA OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSMENT

MARK EACH ITEM CODE AS:
 YES () NO () UNK ()
 YES () NO () UNK ()
 YES () NO () UNK ()

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSMENT

OMBUDSMAN INFORMATION
 Date: _____ Facility: _____
 County: _____ State: _____
 City: _____ Zip: _____

FACILITY INFORMATION
 Facility Name: _____
 Facility Address: _____
 Facility Phone: _____
 Facility Fax: _____
 Facility Email: _____
 Facility Website: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:
 An administrative assessment is a general review of conditions in a facility to ensure that residents' rights, health, safety, and welfare are protected. The assessment is conducted by an ombudsman who is not an employee of the facility. The assessment is conducted in a confidential manner and the results are reported to the Agency for Health Care Administration. The assessment is conducted in a confidential manner and the results are reported to the Agency for Health Care Administration. The assessment is conducted in a confidential manner and the results are reported to the Agency for Health Care Administration.

RESIDENT RIGHTS

RESIDENT RIGHTS	YES	NO	UNK
RR-1: Residents are informed of their rights and responsibilities.			
RR-2: Residents are allowed to choose their room and roommate.			
RR-3: Residents are allowed to choose their diet.			
RR-4: Residents are allowed to choose their clothing.			
RR-5: Residents are allowed to choose their activities.			
RR-6: Residents are allowed to choose their visitors.			
RR-7: Residents are allowed to choose their transportation.			
RR-8: Residents are allowed to choose their medical care.			
RR-9: Residents are allowed to choose their funeral arrangements.			
RR-10: Residents are allowed to choose their place of burial.			

RESIDENT COMMENTS AND OMBUDSMAN OBSERVATIONS:

Community Outreach West Central Ombudsman Council

Florida A&M Volunteer Fair

Janine Rogers from the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), Volunteer and Community Services Manager had a table at the FAMU Volunteer Fair on August 28th. Betsy McAllister and Donna Sims from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) participated by passing out LTCOP volunteer brochures and responding to questions regarding the ombudsman program. The Volunteer Fair was an overall success and there were a lot of students interested about possible internships in the near future with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.



On August 30, 2015 Terri Balzer, West Central Ombudsman, represented the Ombudsman Program on Volunteer Day at Village Presbyterian Church in Tampa. Terri spoke to over 100 people about the Ombudsman Program.

In anticipation of Residents' Rights Month in October, the West Central Ombudsman Council played Residents' Rights bingo at their local council meeting. This game is a great way to engage residents, facility staff and ombudsmen in a lively discussion of Residents' Rights. Throughout October, West Central Ombudsmen will be playing bingo with residents to empower residents and help them celebrate the importance of Residents' Rights.



Pictured are Jean Peelen & Jim Lynch playing and newly elected chairperson Don Courtney showing off his game.

Thank you for your service!

Our North Dade Council honored Lucila Huerta with an award for her 10 years of service as an ombudsman. Her compassion and dedication to the program has been an asset to our council and she has set a great example of what an ombudsman and our program's mission are all about. Lucila's passion for advocating for our residents is very clear by her accomplishments. We thank Lucila and hope to enjoy many more years of her dedicated service. Thank you Lucila, from the entire program.



Governor's Gold Seal Award recognized Nine Nursing Homes for Excellence in Long-Term Care

The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) acknowledged nine Florida nursing homes throughout the state with the Governor's Gold Seal Award. This award is given to facilities that consistently provide excellent quality of care to their residents.

The award-winning nursing homes include six new recipients and three previous recipients. They are listed below:

- Bridgeview Center, Ormond Beach
- Brooksville Healthcare Center, Brooksville
- The Chateau at Moorings Park, Naples
- Concordia Manor, Saint Petersburg
- Conway Lakes Health & Rehabilitation Center, Orlando
- Highlands Lake Center, Lakeland
- Melbourne Terrace Rehabilitation Center, Melbourne
- Riverwood Center, Jacksonville
- Shoal Creek Rehabilitation Center, Crestview

"These Florida nursing homes have some of the best nurses and staff in the country that provide superb healthcare services to our seniors. Providing exceptional healthcare takes dedication and long hours, and I congratulate them all on this achievement," said Florida's Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Secretary, Samuel P. Verghese.

Leigh Davis, State Ombudsman, said, "Ensuring Florida's elders are getting the quality care they deserve is a key priority for our Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. Congratulations to these facilities and their staff for setting the gold standard in the delivery of care that other facilities can aspire to."

Nursing homes that wish to be measured for the Gold Seal Award must first be endorsed for the award, then submit an application with supporting documentation to AHCA, and finally be reviewed by the Governor's Panel on Excellence in Long Term Care. The Panel considers the criteria below and makes recommendations to the Governor. Gold Seal recipients must be in operation a minimum of 30 months prior to the date of application and the facility must:

- Have an outstanding record with the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program within the 30 months preceding application.
- Meet high quality of care standards that places them in the top 15 percent in their region or top 10 percent in the state.
- Have no Class I or II deficiencies within 30 months preceding application.
- Provide evidence of financial soundness and stability.
- Participate in a consumer satisfaction process involving residents, family members and guardians.
- Involve families and members of the community in the facility on a regular basis.
- Have a stable workforce.
- Provide targeted in-service training to meet training needs identified.

The Gold Seal Award program was established and implemented by the Governor's Panel on Excellence in Long Term Care, which is composed of persons appointed by the Governor's Office, AHCA, DOEA, LeadingAge Florida, Florida Health Care Association, Florida Life Care Residents Association and the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

Bridgeview Center
Post-Acute, Rehab & Nursing
It's All In the Way We Care



Highlands Lake Center
Post-Acute, Rehab & Nursing
It's All In the Way We Care



Melbourne Terrace
REHABILITATION CENTER



SHOAL CREEK

SUMMARY OF TOP COMPLAINTS

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is responsible for publishing its complaint data each quarter. The following data reflects verified complaints from cases closed between July 1, 2015—September 30, 2015. The data also shows the number of these complaints resolved.

COMPLAINT DATA TERMS:

Verified: It is determined after work (interviews, record inspection, observation, etc.) that the circumstances described in the complaint are generally accurate.

Not Verified: It is determined after work (interviews, record inspection, observation, etc.), that the circumstances described in the complaint are not generally accurate. Verification is determined by the ombudsman.

Resolved: The complaint was addressed to the satisfaction of the resident. Resolved is one of several disposition codes used by the program. Resolution is determined by the resident.

To find out more about the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's complaint or facility assessment data, call toll-free 1-888-831-0404, and ask to be transferred to a representative in your area. All services are free and confidential.



Quarter 4

(July 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015)

Top five complaints accepted in nursing homes:

	#Complaints	#Verified	#Not Verified	#Resolved
Dignity, respect – staff attitudes (0403)	45	14	31	35
Failure to respond to requests for assistance (0602)	42	16	26	27
Personal hygiene (includes oral hygiene) (0606)	31	8	23	24
Medications – administration, organization (0605))	29	7	22	20
Personal Property (0503)	25	15	10	17

Top five complaints accepted in ALF and AFCH:

	#Complaints	#Verified	#Not Verified	#Resolved
Dignity, respect – staff attitudes (0403)	39	22	17	33
Menu (1003)	32	10	22	27
Cleanliness, pests, general housekeeping (1102)	30	18	12	25
Medications—administration, organization (0605)	34	16	18	32
Shortage of Staff (1302)	21	3	17	21

STATEWIDE STATISTICS

Quarter 4 July 1, 2015—September 30, 2015

Number of Beds	174,508
Number of Volunteer Ombudsmen	305
Facility Assessments	878
Facility Visitations	906
Complaint Investigations	2,153



*Reflects both initiation and closure dates that may overlap quarterly reporting periods.

Florida Council on Aging

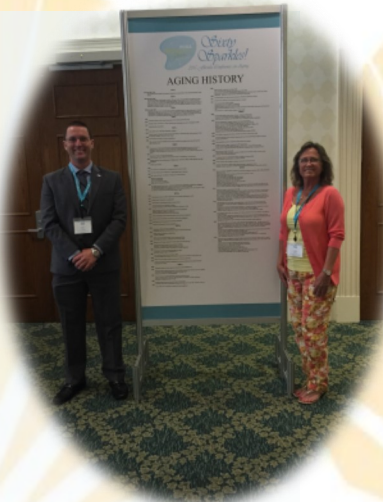
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
4040 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The mission of the Florida Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to improve the quality of life for all Florida long-term care residents by advocating for and protecting their health, safety, welfare and rights.



Leigh Davis, State Ombudsman, and Eric Neiberger, Deputy State Ombudsman for Legal Affairs, attended the Florida Conference on Aging (FCOA) on August 10th—12th in Orlando. The Florida Council on Aging is committed to serving Florida's diverse aging interests through

education, information-sharing and advocacy. Founded in 1955, the Florida Council on Aging is Florida's only statewide association representing virtually all gaining interest and many different disciplines. The 2015 Conference celebrated 60 years for the FCOA.



ATTA-BOY



Mary Darling

"It is with great sadness that I inform you of the passing of dear sweet Aunt Lucille. Thanks to Hospice of Citrus County and Mary Darling from the Ombudsman organization, she went with peace and dignity. I will be eternally thankful for all they did to make her last days comfortable." ~ Donna Shindler. The envelope was addressed "To An Angel on Earth" Mary Darling. "With every breath I take I thank you all so very much and your hard work proves to me that there are still Angels on this Earth. So few do so much and are never recognized." ~ Joanne Lewis



Joanne Crain

"We want to thank Mrs. Crain very much for the prompt attention afforded our mother regarding her care at St. James. We feel that Mrs. Crain's visit last Tuesday with mom has helped initiate some positive reactions at the facility. We are happy to tell you that mother has just been accepted at Nayonet Point Health and Rehabilitation Center in Hudson, FL where she will be close to her daughter, along with coordination by Hospice. Again, thank you for your valuable assistance." ~ Michael & Diane Delany



Wanda Harrison

"In January 2015 the program held a Face to Face State Council meeting. When this meeting was first announced the South Central State Representative determined she was unable to attend. Wanda Harrison stepped up to the plate and attended the meeting in her absence. After the State Council meeting the State Representative determined she could no longer be a part of the State or local council. Wanda Harrison again stepped up and ran for the position. Her great advocacy and willingness to help where it is needed has helped her DOM and council ensure they were represented on the State Council level. Thank you Wanda for being a great Ombudsman!!" ~ Robin Baker



Lynette Johnson

"Lynette Johnson became an Ombudsman for the Palm Beach District in June of 2013. Since then, she has been actively involved in investigating resident complaints and completing facility assessments. Lynette is a Certified Dementia Trainer and she has been actively involved in providing Dementia and Alzheimer's information and training to the Palm Beach and Treasure Coast Councils. She has assisted many residents and their families in offering them information and suggestions on how residents with these cognitive diseases respond to care and treatment. She has provided the same training to staff members of facilities when requested. She provides these services free to facilities. Lynette is always open to handle any complaint within the Palm Beach Council District, as well as take on additional assessments if needed. Lynette is a valuable asset to the Ombudsman Program and we are very fortunate to have her! Lynette, thank you for your outstanding advocacy." ~ JoAnn Quiles