

## Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Ombudsmen provide advocacy and outreach to all patients/residents residing in nursing and rest homes. Ombudsmen help residents resolve complaints about personal care, residents' rights or any type of issue or concern affecting their life as a patient/resident in a long-term care facility. Program staff and volunteers follow written procedures for complaint resolution and adhere to confidentiality. They also serve as a referral source for people in the community with questions about eligibility or placement in long-term care facilities.

Every state has a Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program that addresses complaints and advocates for improvements in the long-term care system as required by the Older Americans Act.

Certified and trained ombudsmen:

- Empower patients/residents in upholding their rights
- Mediate resolution of patient/resident concerns with facility staff
- Provide information and education to patients/residents, resident representatives, facility staff, and the community.

Ombudsmen must have patient/resident consent prior to investigating a complaint or referring a complaint to another agency. When someone other than the patient/resident files a complaint, the ombudsman must

determine, to the extent possible, what the patient/resident wants.

If someone other than a patient/resident, contacts the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program with a complaint, the ombudsman will visit the patient/resident to see if they have similar concerns and wants to pursue the complaint.

### BECOME A VOLUNTEER OMBUDSMAN

Ombudsmen are state trained and certified through the Massachusetts Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's Office in order to enter their assigned facility in an official capacity. All ombudsmen receive a minimum of 24 hours of continuing education annually, and they are re-certified every two years. The program director supervises volunteers.

### COST

There is no cost for Ombudsman support.

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the program, nursing home and rest home placement, eligibility, regulations, or resident's rights, call our Information & Referral Department at 800-892-0890.