



## MESSAGE FROM THE STATE OMBUDSMAN



**Leigh Davis**  
State Ombudsman  
Florida Department of Elder Affairs

The program held its first staff training conference in several years for district and regional managers and Central Office staff the week of September 9-12 in Orlando. With all of the changes that we have experienced this year and with so many new employees, it was essential that staff participate in a training conference and for some, meet each other for the first time. Our goals for the conference were to create unity among staff, learn new skills as managers, review

procedures related to AHCA, and introduce the new Operations Manual. The feedback received after the conference proves we more than accomplished these goals.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following presenters who helped make this training conference a huge success:

**Kim Smoak** with the Agency for Health Care Administration for her Long-Term Care Ombudsman Updates presentation; **Felipe Martinez** with Department of Elder Affairs for his Communication Skills for Supervisors presentation; **Susan Anderson** for her ALF Rule Changes, Referrals, Working with Ombudsman Councils, Administrative Assessment and CE Training, and Legal Issues presentations; **Therese Schroer** for her Budget/Data/Travel Overview and NORS presentations; **Helen Anderson** for her NORS presentation; **Bryan Morgan** for his Recruitment and Retention presentation; **Shannon Knowles** for her Media Relations presentation; **Mike Milliken** for his ALF Rule Changes presentation; **Betsy McAllister** for her Administrative Assessment and CE Training presentation, and **Nancy King** for her Working with Ombudsman Councils presentation.

As we all know, volunteers are the heart of our program, and I was honored to present, alongside DOEA Secretary Charles Corley, the State Ombudsman of the Year Award to Linda O'Leary. Linda was chosen by her peers and the State Council for the award. Secretary Corley and I were also joined by Regional Ombudsman Manager Robin Baker and District Ombudsman Manager Lynn Penley to present Linda with several small gifts from program staff. She is a shining example of why we do what we do.

It is my hope that each year the budget will afford us the opportunity of at least one, if not more, staff training conferences, and one training conference

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that includes volunteers. With the help of the Regional and District Managers, along with numerous staff, Susan and I worked hard to streamline current processes and eliminate those that simply did not benefit the program. We are excited at the positive direction the program is headed through renewed partnerships with state agencies such as AHCA, DCF - Adult Protective Services, and the continued support from DOEA. These relationships, along with dedicated staff and volunteers, is crucial to our

mission to improve the quality of life for all long-term care residents as we serve as their advocates. Thank you all for the hard work you do every day on behalf of Florida's long-term care residents.

Leigh Davis  
State Ombudsman

## LEGAL NEWS

### Rollout of the New and Improved Assessment Forms

Susan Anderson  
Dept. State Ombudsman for Legal Affairs

After receiving corrective feedback from staff and volunteers for almost two years concerning the current Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program administrative assessment form, it was time to take action and make it more efficient. The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council (State Council) assigned the initial gathering of information about a new assessment process to its Advocacy Workgroup. Current ombudsmen, Lauren Eiel (East Central Council) and Lois Matthews-Smith (South Central Council), were instrumental in leading the workgroup in its efforts.

The primary goal for a new administrative assessment was to enable the final document to meet statutory and rule requirements in a manner that promoted ease of use for ombudsmen, consistent objective scoring techniques, formatting for data analysis, and coverage of high volume complaint topics. Some of the suggestions included:

- *Develop a format that is more targeted and prescriptive;*
- *Allow for individual comments under each topic area;*
- *Review questions and topic areas from previous assessment forms and from ombudsman experience to determine critical areas for inclusion;*
- *Order items logistically on the new instrument to promote a "big picture" overview of the facility before assessing details;*
- *Target assessment items based on facility type and perhaps, license type within facility category;*
- *Incorporate assessment items that cover the perennial top five complaint areas;*

- *Make the actual assessment of the conditions in the facility objective instead of subjective for consistency in scoring across the state and between ombudsmen;*
- *Avoid duplicative questions, making the assessment items too lengthy, and avoid addressing multiple issues in one item; and*
- *Make sure the assessment items are from the residents' perspective.*

The image shows a stack of forms used for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. The top form is an 'EXIT INTERVIEW' with fields for 'Conducted with Name' and 'Title', and sections for 'Concerns, comments, observations, and areas of resident satisfaction' and 'Recommendations for enhancing quality of life or --necessities for improvement--'. Below it is an 'ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSMENT' form with sections for 'OMBUDSMAN INFORMATION', 'FACILITY INFORMATION', 'CONSULTATION', and 'FOLLOW-UP'. The 'FACILITY INFORMATION' section includes fields for 'Facility Name', 'Address', 'City / Zip', 'Phone', 'Specialty License', 'Licensee', 'Licensure Category', 'RCC', 'LSC', 'LAW', 'Licensing is pending', 'and current', 'New Check: Yes / No', 'AFCH', and 'Current Cause: No Residents Intervened'. The 'CONSULTATION' section has checkboxes for 'None', 'Individual #', and 'Facility Staff #'. The 'FOLLOW-UP' section has a 'Time In:' field. The bottom form is a 'New Assessment Form' with instructions for conducting the assessment, including identifying the facility, identifying personnel, and conducting the assessment.

New  
Assessment Form

The Advocacy Workgroup addressed these items and put them all together to present to the full State Council for discussion. The ombudsman representatives on the State Council voted to go forward with a process that included review of assessment items, refining language, and field testing with feedback provided to staff. All ombudsmen were invited to participate in the field testing and comment portion of the assessment development, making this a truly program-wide effort.

After a summer of this activity; field testing, feedback, and revisions, the launch of the final version of the administrative assessment form was scheduled for October 1. The program's extensive reliance on the generous contributions of volunteers makes it essential to take their concerns into consideration when making program changes that affect a large volume of their work. By streamlining our processes and forms, volunteers and staff will be able to focus less on procedural paperwork and more on the needs of the long-term care residents we serve.

# RESIDENT'S RIGHTS

## October is Residents' Rights Month



the dignity, respect and the value of each individual resident. The theme for Residents' Rights Month 2014 is "Better Staffing: The Key to Better Care" with the goal of encouraging residents and others to be educated about staffing and long-term care.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, through assistance from over three hundred dedicated volunteers, serves as an advocate for individuals living in long-term care facilities. Our program consistently empowers residents to know their rights and often provides a voice for those who may not be able to speak up for themselves. In sections 400.022, 429.28, and 429.85 of the Florida Statutes, individuals' rights are specifically outlined as it relates to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and family adult care homes and may be accessed through our website at the following link <http://ombudsman.myflorida.com/ResidentsRights.php>

Those living in long-term facilities can expect to maintain basic rights that include, but are not limited to:

- *Right to participate in one's own care;*
- *Right to privacy and confidentiality;*
- *Right to dignity, respect, and freedom;*
- *Right to visitors;*
- *Right to make choices and to be involved in the community; and*
- *Right to be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.*

Shannon Knowles  
Communications Director  
Central Office

When an individual moves into a long-term care facility, their rights don't stop at the front door. Rather, those basic rights follow them into their new home. Residents' Rights Month, held annually in October, provides an opportunity to remind and assist residents, their families, and facility staff to celebrate and exercise these rights and to promote

To mark this special occasion, Governor Scott signs a proclamation observing October as National Long-Term Care Residents' Rights Month. This affirmation honors and celebrates residents' guaranteed individual rights under the federal Nursing Home Reform Act of 1987.

It is important that long-term care facility residents, and their caregivers or family members, know and understand the rights afforded to them under state and federal law. Having a better understanding of the law by both residents and long-term care facilities helps to avoid unnecessary miscommunication and provides a better living environment for the resident.

# ATTA-BOY

he and his colleagues provide for seniors in Florida. Thank you, thank you, and thank you." ~ Ms. Scott, PhD, MBA

"I would like to thank Mike Milliken for his assistance regarding care issues for my paternal grandmother. I appreciated his time listening, advising, and answering my questions. I appreciate the work that

"I would like to thank Ms. Sandy Martin and Ms. Tracie Rayfield for the great job they did helping me. I appreciate both of your hard working employees and for the program. Thank you!" ~ Mr. Harvey, Jacksonville



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

## Elaine Stubbs

Mike Phillips  
District Ombudsman Manager  
Northwest

Many of you who read this article will remember Peggy Lee singing the song, "Is That All There Is?" As she reflects on the different stages of her life, she injects the rather depressing refrain, "Is that all there is?" Not so for Elaine Stubbs, one of our newer ombudsmen in the Northwest District Office.

Elaine approaches each stage of her life with excellence, energy, enthusiasm, and excitement. And, as one stage morphs into another, she finds more excitement, more joy, and more success.

Having suffered the loss of her teenage daughter to a tragic car accident, Elaine embarked on a new career in healthcare at the age of 38. After serving as a labor and delivery RN, she moved to the other end of the health care spectrum and began applying her skills and services to nursing homes. Elaine devoted twenty-seven years to long-term care as director of nursing, administrator to large nursing homes in Florida and Georgia, regional director (the only female regional director in Florida at the time) for ten centers in South Florida, and as a consultant for many top-flight long-term care facilities across the country from Massachusetts to California.

Not only has she "been there -- done that," but she's written about it. "Dandelions in December," one of her many books (this one being autobiographical in style), peeks inside the world of long-term care and allows the reader to vicariously experience not only the struggles associated with running a nursing home, but also the compassion, pathos, and – oh, yes – humor necessary to survive. She has



**Elaine Stubbs**  
Ombudsman Volunteer

also written "When The Time Comes, Nursing Home Guide" to assist readers in finding and selecting the right nursing home for their loved one.

One of Elaine's core belief is that you should do everything in your power to meet the needs of your patient or resident. Empathy brings understanding. Not certain if the staff at a particular facility had an appropriate appreciation for how difficult it was for a new resident, she admitted herself in disguise. She stated that unfortunately they did not, but they learned quickly.

With an impressive and colorful career behind her, one might ask, "Is that all there is?" "No, no, there is much more to come, and I can't wait to experience its unfolding," she says. "Each stage of life builds upon another; without the prior, the present would not be possible. And the lessons and experiences of the past continue to provide immeasurable rewards and benefits in the future. For me, retirement into nothingness is selfish

when there is so much more to give and gain from life."

"As an ombudsman, I enjoy interacting with our wonderful residents and also the centers' staff. I always put residents first and I'm proud to say the professionals in the centers I work with seem to be the same – we'll see. They do feel comfortable with me in discussing problems that I have experienced over the many years on their side of the desk," said Elaine.

"Long-term care gets into your blood and I am proud to be an ombudsman. It's a perfect job. I'm not responsible for the bottom lines of profit & loss reports in a facility and I don't have to deal with the myriad of problems an administrator faces every day. While empathetic, I have the luxury of focusing on and fixing one problem at a time for long-term care residents. What a joy!"

# EVENTS:

## *Panhandle District Office Participates at the Tallahassee Senior Center Active Living Expo*

Jessica Thomas  
Administrative Assistant  
Panhandle

The 16th annual Active Living Expo was held Thursday and Friday, September 11-12, at the Tallahassee Senior Center. Seventy-one exhibitors provided health screenings and information on community resources to hundreds of attendees. The expo commenced on Thursday evening with a reception, vendors, games, and it culminated Friday with an even bigger celebration. The atmosphere in the ballroom was festive, joyful, and filled with bursts of laughter and the aroma of fresh popcorn. All exhibitors offered a plethora of information and free goodies.



Display at Tallahassee Senior Center



Jessica Thomas  
Administrative Assistant  
Panhandle

The Panhandle Long-Term Care Ombudsman District Office was a vendor at the expo and provided attendees with information on volunteering, residents' rights, and promotional items. Ombudsman Barbara Brandt, said "It was very pleasing to know some attendees were already knowledgeable of the LTCOP, and this provided a greater opportunity to extend an invitation to join our program."



**LEFT TO RIGHT:**  
Mary Walker and Barbara Brandt, Ombudsmen  
Volunteers

All attendees who visited the Ombudsman table were very appreciative of the information. One attendee in particular found the information to be very helpful and was very moved to have learned of the program's services.

Ombudsman Joanne Crain, said, "I think it's a good way for people to become more aware of our program and to be able to share that information with others. I want long-term care residents to know that they have a voice, because we are their voice."

*“It was very pleasing to know some attendees were already knowledgeable of the LTCOP and this provided a greater opportunity to extend an invitation to join our program.”*

Other Ombudsmen who attended the event were Mary Walker, Claudette Cromartie, and David Ferguson. Overall, the event seemed to be an excellent forum to highlight the program.

National Senior Center Month, held annually in September, provides an opportunity for senior centers to showcase their services and promote a positive image of aging. The expo provided such an event. The National Council on Aging, encourages senior centers across the national to celebrate this month with the 2014 theme "Senior Centers: Experts at Living Well".



**LEFT TO RIGHT:**  
Joanne Crain and Claudette Cromartie,  
Ombudsmen Volunteers



# SUMMARY OF TOP COMPLAINTS

Under State law, 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, 2014 – September 30, 2014. 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, 2014 to September 30, 2014)

### Top 5 complaints accepted in Nursing Homes

	#Complaints	#Verified	#Not Verified	#Resolved
Dignity, respect - staff attitudes (0403)	58	28	30	38
Menu (1003)	53	20	33	18
Failure to respond to requests for assistance (0602)	45	20	25	19
Medications - administration, organization (0605)	41	18	23	15
Personal hygiene (includes oral hygiene) (0606)	40	15	25	16

### Top 5 complaints accepted in ALF and AFCH

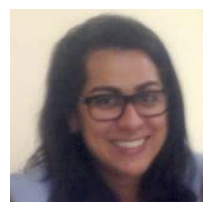
	#Complaints	#Verified	#Not Verified	#Resolved
Cleanliness, pests, general housekeeping (1102)	69	39	30	30
Medications - administration, organization (0605)	63	22	41	17
Dignity, respect - staff attitudes (0403)	57	31	26	21
Menu (1003)	51	24	27	20
Equipment/Buildings (1103)	50	24	26	20

## STATEWIDE STATISTICS

Quarter 4 July 1 - September 30, 2014

Number of Beds	<b>171,895</b>
Number of Volunteer Ombudsmen	<b>322</b>
Facility Assessments	<b>924</b>
Facility Visitations	<b>551</b>
Complaint Investigations	<b>1,998</b>

## WELCOME!



In July of this year, the LTCOP's Central Office hired Juliana Figueiredo as the new Graphic Designer for the

program. She received her Bachelor's degree in Brazil where she was born and is currently working on her Master's degree at the University of South Florida.

With over 10 years of experience, Juliana has worked for many exceptional companies and state agencies, including her last position in graphic design at the Florida Department of Lottery. Prior to working with the Department of Lottery, she lectured as a professor for two years at Northeast Iowa Community College in the Graphic Design and Computer Science Departments.

With her web and graphic design knowledge and years of experience, Juliana is excited to work with the LTCOP in the redesign and rebranding of the program's informational material. These materials will be used to inform and educate residents of long-term care facilities, as well as their friends and family, the general public, and new ombudsman volunteers. Please join us in welcoming Juliana to our program!