

The mission of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is to seek resolution of problems and advocate for the rights of residents of long-term care facilities with the goal of enhancing the quality of life and care of residents.



Concerned your loved one is not getting good care, but told you are expecting too much?

Good quality care of residents in long-term care is important. It takes many people working together to make this happen.

Using these indicators, you can recognize some of the signs of good and bad care. Together, with the support of residents and family members, we can work to improve the quality of care for all residents.

Contact your local Ombudsman:



or call:

Illinois Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Illinois Department on Aging
421 East Capitol Avenue
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1789

Senior HelpLine:
1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

www.state.il.us/aging

Download this brochure at www.state.il.us/aging in the "News and Publications" section.

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY).

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State of Illinois
Pat Quinn, Governor
Illinois Department on Aging
Charles D. Johnson, Director



Indicators and Action Steps



How can you judge the quality of life in a long-term care facility?

Illinois Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
Illinois Department on Aging

Indicators

- Residents look nice, even those in bed
- Residents busy doing interesting activities in and out of the building
- Facility is clean, smells fresh
- Facility has a comfortable temperature
- Food looks and smells appetizing
- The whole atmosphere feels positive and life-affirming
- End-of-life care is sensitive and hospice-based

Indicators

- Residents' rights often disregarded
- Activities are not age-appropriate, look boring; cancelled often
- Residents eating in their rooms because of short staffing
- Residents appear to be guarded in communication with visitors
- Families talk about complaints not being resolved
- Care plan meetings are hurried and participation is not encouraged
- "Too much" agency staff: staff don't know the residents
- Call lights not answered properly; turned off with an unfulfilled promise to return
- Staff are noisy, especially at night

Indicators

- Residents fearful, families being "put down" by administration
- Residents appear to be losing weight and mobility
- Residents look untidy and are smelly, especially those in bed
- Residents are physically restrained
- Residents are slumped in wheelchairs and left alone
- Noticeable disregard for residents and their rights
- Skimpy meals, missing snacks, increased tube feedings
- Care plans ignored

Action Steps

Get to know your Ombudsman

Relax and enjoy your visit

Start a Family Council and invite speakers to educate families on issues

Volunteer with the Activities Department

Invite your social group to have meetings in the facility and include the residents

Look around for residents who have no family and get to know them

Let the staff know what a good job they are doing

Action Steps

Work with the Ombudsman to address both individual complaints and the concerns that affect all of the residents

Begin to make specific notes of problems that seem to affect all residents

Visit at odd hours and on weekends, make notes of problems you see

Voice your concerns at Family Council, discuss recommendations for improvement, give to the Administrator, ask for response and meeting

Check the survey report to see if the state is citing the facility for the things you observe

Action Steps

Work with the Ombudsman to address individual complaints if things don't improve

Contact the Ombudsman to help you prepare your complaint

Report abuse, gross neglect and other concerns to the Illinois Department of Public Health Hotline at 1-800-252-4343

Find out who owns the facility and take your concerns there

Invite your local state Senator or Representative to tour the facility

Consider contacting the media