



THE VOICE

The e-newsletter of National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

December 4, 2018

40th Anniversary of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

It has been 40 years since the 1978 Amendments to the Older Americans Act required every state to have an Ombudsman Program and specifically defined Ombudsman functions and responsibilities.

In 1972, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program started out as a public health service demonstration project to meet the needs of residents facing problems in nursing homes. Today, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program consists of 53 state programs and their statewide networks of over 500 local Ombudsman entities. Read the full list of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program's milestones from 1972 to 2016 as a PDF [here](#) and on the NORC website [here](#).

For more information about ombudsman program accomplishments, read the recent issue of [NORC Notes](#).

Long-term care ombudsmen, thank you for your continued advocacy and dedication to achieving quality long-term care for the past 40 years. We welcome you to share pictures, brief comments, or quotes about your work in the long-term

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care ombudsman program by emailing ombudcenter@theconsumervoice.org.

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Free Webinar about the New National Consensus Project's Palliative Care Guidelines, 4th Edition

The National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care is hosting a complimentary webinar on Monday, December 17, 2:30 – 4 pm (Eastern). Speakers will present an overview of the newly published National Consensus Project's *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care, 4th edition* (NCP Guidelines).

Learn more and register [here](#). Early registration is encouraged; space is limited.

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Senate Special Committee on Aging Releases Report on Guardianship

The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging released a report "Ensuring Trust: Strengthening State Efforts to Overhaul the Guardianship Process and Protect Older Americans." The report follows a year-long investigation of guardianship arrangements in the United States. It provides details about the problems facing guardianship and makes recommendations for reform. In response to the report, Senator Bob Casey, Jr. introduced [legislation](#) to help expand background checks and improve oversight of guardians.

Read the report [here](#).

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CMS Releases New Resource to Prevent All

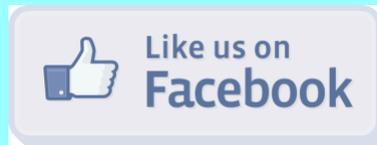
December 2-8: [National Influenza Vaccination Week](#)

Tuesday, December 4: [Advocating for Residents with Mental Health Needs: What to do When a Resident Threatens Harming Themselves or Others](#), 3:00pm ET, NORC webinar for long-term care ombudsman

Thursday, December 13: [After Receiving Final Statewide Transition Plan Approval: Tackling the Ongoing Systems-Change Work that Remains](#), 2:00pm ET, Part III of ACL Webinar Series

Monday, December 17: [Clinical Practice Guidelines for Quality Palliative Care, 4th Edition](#), 2:30pm ET, Webinar from the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care

Join the conversation and follow us on social media!



Last Week's Most Popular Post:

Wednesday, November 28:
[How a Paradise nursing home staff saved the lives of 91 patients](#)



Cause Harm in Nursing Homes

Telligen, the Quality Innovation Network National Coordinating Center, has released a new resource - a Change Package intended to prevent adverse events nursing homes. This project was funded by The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and was designed to include strategies and actions to prevent the types of adverse events identified by a [2014 Office of Inspector General report](#), which highlighted the need for nursing homes to reduce the incidence of harm among residents and to report allegations of abuse or neglect and investigation results in a timely manner. The Change Package is focused on successful practices of nursing homes identified as high-performing by Telligen based on various data sources, including the CMS five star rating system. The practices identified themes around how the nursing facilities approached prevention of harm and strategies to prevent specific adverse events and abuse.

Access the Change Package [here](#).

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It's National Influenza Vaccination Week

[National Influenza Vaccination Week](#) is December 2-8, 2018. The week raises awareness for the importance of continuing flu vaccinations during and after the holiday season. Getting vaccinated later can still be beneficial and should be done as soon as possible before flu begins spreading in your community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides specific information for [People 65 Years and Older](#) and for [Health Professionals](#).

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Spotlight on Resources

Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Tuesday, November 27:

[Join us today for the global day of giving #GivingTuesday as we Stand for Quality Care!](#)

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [New data show hundreds of thousands of elder abuse cases even with huge reporting gaps](#), November 28, 2018, *USA Today*

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December 4, 2018

New CMS Initiative to Focus on Staffing

On November 30, 2018, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released a [memo](#) outlining several actions it is implementing related to staffing. Two key steps the agency is taking are described below.

1. CMS is requiring a) states to target certain facilities with low weekend staffing for weekend surveys; and b) surveyors to investigate compliance with the requirement for an RN eight hours a day, seven days a week in facilities with reported days without an RN onsite.

CMS review of the new Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) data has determined that some facilities are reporting days without any RN on duty and/or significantly low nurse staffing levels on weekends. As a result, CMS will use the PBJ data to prepare a list of facilities with potential staffing issues that it will provide to state survey agencies. CMS Regional Offices will also receive this information.

The list will be used to focus greater attention on facilities with possible insufficient staffing levels as follows:

- State survey agencies are mandated to complete 10% of all surveys in their state on the weekend or before 8:00 am or after 6:00 pm. They will now be required to conduct at least 50% of those off-hours surveys on the weekends and in the facilities CMS has identified as having low weekend staffing.

[Voice and NORC websites](#) to explore all the available resources. Check out this week's highlighted resource:

[Consumer Voice Policy Break: New CMS Initiative to Focus on Staffing](#)

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Consumer Voice and the National Ombudsman Resource Center have a multitude of resources available online covering a wide range of long-term care topics. Visit the [Consumer](#)

About The Voice

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Consumer Voice is the leading national voice representing consumers in issues related to long-term care, helping to ensure that consumers are empowered to advocate for themselves. We are a primary source of information and tools for consumers, families, caregivers, advocates and ombudsmen to help ensure quality care for the individual. Consumer Voice's mission is to represent consumers at the national level for quality long-term care, services and supports.

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