

Ombudsman Advocacy in Assisted Living/Board and Care: Past, Present, and Future



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Assisted Living vs. SNF

◆ Quarterly Visits vs. Monthly Visits:

- ◆ In Colorado LLTCO are Mandated to visit ALFs/Board and Care Homes quarterly.
 - Visit as needed and for complaints.
 - Often visiting multiple times per quarter.
- ◆ ALF/Board & Care Homes carry the same license in Colorado.

◆ Why have an ALF Specialist Team & SNF Specialist Team?

- ◆ Growth
 - Over 300 ALFs in the Denver metro area.
- ◆ Lack of regulations
- ◆ Moving away from complaint only visits vs. compliance visits.
 - Historically visits were only done when a complaint was filed.
- ◆ Having a different advocacy approach.
 - Advocating in a Board and Care Home is very different than a large ALF or even a SNF.

How can we be effective ALF Advocates?

- ◆ **Receive Training**
 - ◆ NORC
 - ◆ State Ombudsman – Shelley Hitt
 - ◆ Special populations: MI, BI, DD, Alzheimer's/Dementia , & LGBT.
- ◆ **Provide Resources**
 - ◆ Posters
 - ◆ Residents' Rights bookmarks
 - ◆ Business cards
- ◆ **Partnerships with outside agencies**
 - ◆ Health Dept Surveyors
 - ◆ SEP
 - ◆ APS
 - ◆ PACE Program
 - ◆ Mental Health Centers
- ◆ **Build Relationships**
 - ◆ Residents
 - ◆ Family members
 - ◆ Administrators
 - ◆ Staff
- ◆ **Provide Information and Referral**
 - ◆ Residents
 - ◆ Families
 - ◆ Outside Agencies

How can we be effective ALF Advocates?

- ◆ **Encourage the ALF to “do the right thing”.**
- ◆ **Share Information & Resources**
 - ◆ LLTCO within your organization or around your state.
 - ◆ LLTCO around the country.
- ◆ **Be Creative**
 - ◆ The art of bluffing
 - ◆ Doubling up or team visits
 - ◆ Thinking outside the regulations
 - ◆ Using the ALF/B&C own policies, procedures, & admission agreement as an advocacy tool.
- ◆ **Be Persistent**
 - ◆ Repeat visits
 - ◆ Being visible
 - ◆ Attending resident council meetings and/or Family Council meetings.
- ◆ **Provide Training**
 - ◆ Providing training to ALF staff.
 - Residents’ Rights; Dealing with difficult behaviors; and Sexuality
 - ◆ Providing training to residents on their rights.
 - ◆ Consultation to Administrators and/or staff
 - ◆ 30 hour training provided to Admin/Owners
 - ◆ Project Visibility to staff & outside agencies

Barriers to Being an Effective ALF/B&C Advocate:

- ◆ Very few regulations
- ◆ Inadequately Trained Owners/Operators
- ◆ Lack of Professionalism
- ◆ Uncooperative – not willing to problem solve.
- ◆ No accountability
- ◆ Lack of consistency
 - ◆ B&C vs. ALF
- ◆ **Staffing**
 - ◆ Training
 - ◆ Not enough to meet residents' needs.
 - ◆ High turnover
 - ◆ Language barrier

How do we track systemic issues?

- ◆ Attend the Assisted Living Residences Advisory at the Health Dept.
- ◆ We created a workgroup between the ALR team, HCPF, & Health Dept.
- ◆ We attend monthly Adult Protection Review Team Meetings.
- ◆ Initiated a proposed licensure of Assisted Living Facility Administrators/Operators through the Sunrise Application process at DORA.
- ◆ Legislative participation
- ◆ Sit on local BHO Stakeholders Council
- ◆ Work with local LBGT organization - SAGE

Trends :

- ◆ **Higher level of care**
 - ◆ Lack of regulations & oversight.
- ◆ **Growth**
- ◆ **Spend down requirements**
- ◆ **Younger mentally ill population.**
 - ◆ Lack of housing options
 - ◆ Lack of resources
- ◆ **Increase in Residents' Rights violations**
 - ◆ Dignity/respect
 - ◆ Verbal abuse
 - ◆ B & C homes blur the lines/ boundaries.
- ◆ **Discharge Notices**

Questions???

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