



Fact Sheet: Where to Turn for Help with Your Home Care

Many individuals prefer to receive care and services at home rather than in an institutional setting, such as a nursing home. Some will use the services of a home care agency, while others prefer to hire individuals privately to provide care and services. Despite best efforts by the home care agency staff and administration, you may experience problems or concerns about the care you receive in your home. There are things you can do to help resolve problems.

Express Your Concerns

- Express your concerns to your caregiver and/or their supervisor. Be as specific as you can about the problems you're having. Think of the 5 W's – who, what, when, where, and why. Try to have information about as many of those W's as possible when making your complaint.
 - For example, instead of “I don't like how she gives me a shower,” you might say, “I have told Mary that I don't like getting my hair wet during my shower, but the last four times my hair has gotten wet because she lets the water run over my head.”
- Ask a family member or friend to be there with you if it would make you feel more comfortable.
- Express what you would like to have happen and ask how the problem will be resolved to your satisfaction. It would be best to think of your solution before you express your concerns.
 - For example, “When Mary gives me a shower, I would like her to make sure I have on a shower cap, direct the spray of water so it doesn't hit my head or face, and give me a washcloth so that I can wash my face.”
- Know your rights based on your contract with the caregiver or agency, and/or based on state law.

If You Need Outside Help

While it's always best to try to resolve any problems directly with the caregiver or agency, if a situation arises where you need additional help, there are places you can go:

- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.** Long-term care ombudsmen serve as advocates for consumers of long-term care. To find contact information for your long-term care ombudsman, call the Ohio State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at (800) 282-1206 or go to: <http://www.ltombudsman.org/ombudsman/ohio>
- **Ohio Area Agencies on Aging (O4A).** Area Agencies on Aging investigate abuse and neglect of vulnerable older adults in Ohio who live in the community. Contact information for the closest O4A office near you can be found here: <http://www.ohioaging.org/default.aspx>
- **Centers for Independent Living (CILs).** Centers for Independent Living are organizations that provide services to maximize the independence of individuals with disabilities. To learn more about the services they provide, and locate a CIL near you, go to <http://www.virtualcil.net/cils/query-iandr.php?state=oh>.
- **Ohio Disability Rights Network** (also known as Protection & Advocacy) work to address concerns about care and services, rights, access to services, and more for people with disabilities both in residential and community settings. To contact the P&A in Ohio, go to <http://www.disabilityrightsohio.org/> or call (614) 466-7264.

For more information, see Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care, a resource guide published by The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care to empower people with disabilities and older adults to be self-advocates for quality long-term care. The guide may be downloaded for free or purchased in hard copy at www.theconsumervoice.org.