



THE VOICE

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

February 13, 2018

Article Published in *AgingToday* on Emergency Preparedness

Consumer Voice Executive Director Lori Smetanka and former Ohio State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Beverley Laubert have published an article on emergency preparedness in the American Society on Aging's newspaper, *AgingToday*. Long-term care facilities are required by law to have plans for emergency procedures. However, in the past, regulations were not clear on what details needed to be included in the plans, and recent natural disasters have revealed that many long-term care facilities and community care systems are unprepared to handle emergencies and protect their residents and patients.

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina when 215 nursing home residents and hospital patients died because of plan failures, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed resources and guidance on emergency preparedness. Yet, despite the efforts of CMS and at state and local levels, problems persisted in nursing homes.

In 2016, CMS wrote more comprehensive rules around emergency preparedness including requiring 17 different provider types, including nursing facilities, to have an emergency preparedness program that meets all federal,

In this Issue

[Article Published in *AgingToday* on Emergency Preparedness](#)

[NORC Webinar on Systems Advocacy](#)

[Call for Session Proposals for 2018 Consumer Voice Conference](#)

[Continued Advocacy Needed for Money Follows the Person Program](#)

[Video Series on People with Disabilities' Experience with the Healthcare System](#)

[Spotlight on Resources](#)

Calendar of Events

state and local requirements and to develop policies and procedures based on the emergency plan; to require training and to test the plans; and to mandate standby power systems. For the rules to be effective, there must be sufficient implementation, monitoring and enforcement. Residents and families should ask about the emergency plan and know what it entails. Long-term care ombudsmen can assist during emergency situations by focusing on the individual residents. They can help with locating lost personal items, checking in with residents who require relocating, and advocating for quality care.

For more information, read the article [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

NORC Webinar on Systems Advocacy

State Ombudsmen and Ombudsman program representatives, register now for the "Systems Advocacy: It's More than Legislative Work" webinar on Wednesday, March 7th from 3:00pm - 4:15pm ET. Participants will learn what is required under the federal law and rule regarding systems advocacy. Presenters will share how they promote better care through systems advocacy at both the state and local level and how they coordinate their advocacy. Attendees will also learn about available NORC resources regarding systems advocacy.

Register [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

Call for Session Proposals for 2018 Consumer Voice Conference

Consumer Voice is pleased to invite proposals for sessions during the 2018 Consumer Voice Annual Conference, October 22-24, 2018 in Alexandria, VA. **Proposals are due March 16, 2018.**

We are looking for proposals that create an engaging, informative conference agenda that provides resources,

Thursday, February 22: Consumer Voice Member Call, 2:00pm ET, Featuring Hannah Flamm, author of the recent Human Rights Watch report on antipsychotics; [Join or renew your Consumer Voice membership](#) to participate.

Thursday, February 22: [MDT Member Recruitment and Retention: Building Trust and Traction](#), 2:00pm ET, Webinar from Elder Justice Initiative

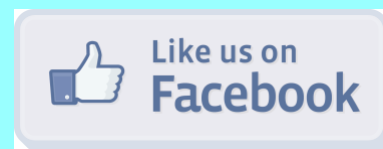
Wednesday, March 7: [Systems Advocacy: It's More than Legislative Work](#), 3:00pm ET, Webinar from NORC

Tuesday, March 20: [Dementia Care: Person-Centered Care Planning and Practice Recommendations Call](#), 1:30pm ET, Medicare Learning Network Call

May: [Older Americans Month](#)

October 22-24: Consumer Voice Annual Conference, Alexandria, Virginia

Join the conversation and follow us on social media!



Last Week's Most Popular Post:

Monday, February 5:
[Human Rights Watch has issued a report today on US nursing homes overmedicating residents with dementia.](#)

tools, and strategies our attendees can incorporate in their life and/or advocacy. This year's conference theme is Quality NOW: Consumer Rights are Human Rights! Proposals.

Review the [Call for Proposals and Presenter Requirements](#) and submit your proposal via SurveyMonkey. Visit this link to submit your proposal: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018CVProposal>.

NOTE: You will not be able to save incomplete submissions in SurveyMonkey, so you may want to review and print or save the [PDF version](#) of the proposal questions so you can plan your responses prior to starting the submission.

Find further details and more information about submitting [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

Continued Advocacy Needed for Money Follows the Person Program

We want to thank everyone who reached out to their Senators to co-sponsor the [EMPOWER Care Act](#) which would continue the Money Follows the Person program (MFP). Unfortunately, the MFP program was not included in the federal budget deal that was passed last week. However, Congress can still continue funding for the MFP program by including it in the March 23 Omnibus Spending Bill.

The need to extend the MFP program is urgent. CMS has issued a [document](#) showing that a number of states have already stopped transitioning individuals back into the community, and others will stop doing so sometime this year. We urge everyone to let their Senators know how vital the MFP program is for long-term care consumers – and mark your calendars for more advocacy action during the week of March 5.

[Back to Top](#)

Video Series on People with Disabilities' Experience with the Healthcare System

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Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Monday, February 5:

[U.S. Government Accountability Office issued a report finding large gaps in the regulation of assisted living facilities.](#)

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [Safe Seniors program uses DOJ cameras to catch elder abuse](#) *Green Bay Press Gazette*, February 6, 2018
- [Long-term care watchdogs to push for restrictions on patient "dumping"](#) *The State Journal-Register*, February 3, 2018

DONATE NOW

Read past issues of The Voice [here](#).

Support the Consumer Voice While You Shop Online

The Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing has produced a series of videos that show how people with disabilities experience the healthcare system. The video series offers ways for providers to be more prepared in their interactions with people with disabilities while promoting compassion and understanding for everyone. Topics in the series include: the healthcare experience for people with disabilities; what is disability competent care?; core values of disabilities competent care; and disability competence in communication access, programmatic access and physical access.

Watch the videos [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

Spotlight on Resources

The Consumer Voice and the National Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) have a multitude of resources available online covering a wide range of long-term care topics. Visit the [Consumer Voice website](#) and the [NORC website](#) to explore all the available resources. Take a look at this week's highlighted resource:

[Disabilities Issue Page](#) - This NORC issue page provides information and resources for individuals with disabilities, including paralysis resources and information on assistive technology.

[Back to Top](#)



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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