



# THE VOICE

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

January 30, 2018

## Urge Congress to Continue the Money Follows the Person Program

The future of the [Money Follows the Person](#) (MFP) program is at risk. Enacted in 2005, the MFP program is one of the longest running, most successful Medicaid demonstrations. MFP has assisted more than 75,000 long-term care consumers with moving into a setting of their choice, and has helped 44 states improve access to home and community-based services. In addition, the MFP program provides an important quality framework and data collection and reporting requirements to build a solid state HCBS infrastructure.

Independent evaluations have proven MFP improves the quality of life for individuals, and reduced Medicaid and Medicare expenditures by approximately 23%. Unfortunately, MFP expired September 30, 2016, and states are running out of funding. As a result, states are scaling back their programs, reducing dedicated staff and crucial resources. Last year was the first time that the number of people transitioned to the community declined. Without action NOW, the program will lose progress.

Senators Portman (R-OH) and Cantwell (D-WA) have introduced bipartisan legislation ([EMPOWER Care Act - S. 2227](#)) to improve and extend the program for five years. For more information on the EMPOWER Care Act, please click [here](#).

### In this Issue

[Urge Congress to Continue the Money Follows the Person Program](#)

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

[Materials Available from Webinar on Revised Federal Nursing Home Regulations](#)

[It's Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week](#)

[OMB Posts Notice to Reform Requirements of Participation](#)

[Spotlight on Resources](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)

Urge your Senators to co-sponsor the bill! Take action by following the steps and talking points below:

1. **Action #1: National Call-In Day, Thursday February 1, 2018**
  - Call Your Senators: Call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 or (202) 224-3091 (TTY) and ask to be connected to your Senators. Ask your Senator to co-sponsors the EMPOWER Care Act S. 2227 to extend the MFP program and pass it immediately.
  - RSVP to this [Facebook event](#), which contains information on how to call your Senators. View Center for Public Representation's [page](#) for more information on the call-in day.
2. **Action #2: National Social Media Day, Friday February 2, 2018**
  - Tweet and Post on Facebook:
  - Tag Senators' Twitter handles. Find handles here:  
<https://twitter.com/cspan/lists/senators/members>.
  - Target the Senate Finance Committee members. You can find members on this committee by clicking  
<https://www.finance.senate.gov/about/membership>.
  - Use hashtag #FundMFP in your posts and tweets. Download sample social media content [here](#), and download graphics [here](#).
  - RSVP to this [Facebook event](#), which will house information on the many ways to communicate with Senators about this issue on social media. View Center for Public Representation's [page](#) for more information on the social media day.
3. **Action #3: Email Your Senators before February 8, 2018**
  - Click [here](#) to send a pre-crafted email to your Senators. You're invited to personalize your message if you wish.
  - Be sure to tell Congress to consider MFP during negotiations on the budget and other extensions of health-related programs in the coming weeks. An extension of the MFP program must be included.

**January 29 - February 2:** [Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week](#)

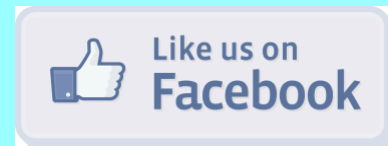
**Wednesday, February 7:** Suspicious Activity Reports and Their Role in Identifying and Remediating Elder Financial Exploitation, 2:00pm ET, Webinar from the Administration for Community Living, Registration information forthcoming

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

**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:**

**Tuesday, January 23:**

[The President has signed the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support and Engage \(RAISE\) Family Caregivers Act into law.](#)

A graphic with the text 'follow us on twitter' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. 'follow us on' is in grey and 'twitter' is in blue. The text is centered on a white rectangular background.

For talking points and more information on the MFP Program, visit our [website](#).

[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.

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

- Concrete advocacy strategies,
- Examples of advocacy and/or educational programs for individuals or systems advocacy,
- Issues related to nursing homes, assisted living, and/or home and community based services,
- Opportunities for discussion, question, and/or sharing of advocacy successes and challenges related to the topic, and
- Information attendees can use in their daily life or work to improve the quality of long-term care.

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.

Session proposals are due **March 16, 2018**.

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

[Back to Top](#)

### Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Wednesday, January 24:

[Join us tomorrow for Making It Real: Using the Revised Federal Nursing Home Regulations in Your Advocacy](#)

### Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [Ruling opens door to punitive damages in Pennsylvania malpractice case McKnight's](#), January 29, 2018

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## Materials Available from Webinar on Revised Federal Nursing Home Regulations

Materials are now available from our recent webinar *Making it Real: Using the Revised Federal Nursing Home Regulations in Your Advocacy*. Experts from Center for Medicare Advocacy and Justice in Aging discuss how to address common problems and promote quality person-centered care and residents' rights by using the revised federal nursing home regulations. View the recording and slides [here](#). Find additional resources on our website including the revised federal nursing home regulations [Issue Briefs](#); [Rule Resources](#), including Summaries of Key Changes and the Side-by-Side Comparison of the Revised & Previous Federal Nursing Home Regulations; and our [webpage](#) on the revised federal nursing home regulations.

[Back to Top](#)

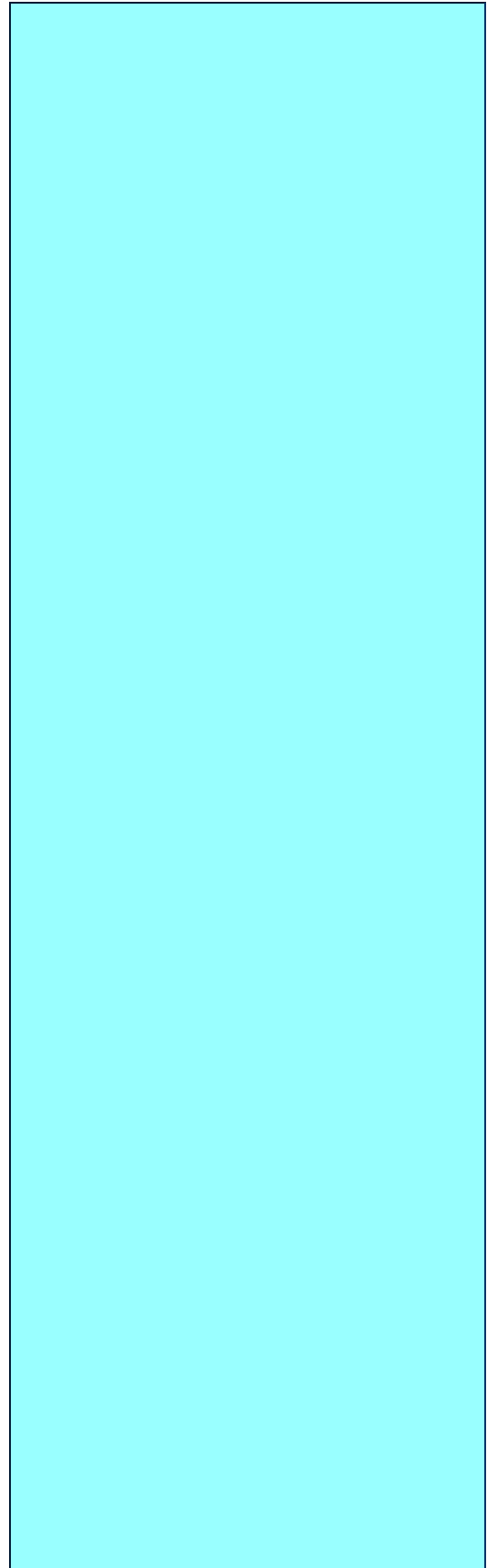
## It's Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week

January 29 - February 2 is Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week. Tax identity theft happens when someone uses your Social Security number to get a tax refund or a job. You might find out it has happened when you get a letter from the IRS saying more than one tax return was filed in your name, or IRS records show you have wages from an employer you don't know. Learn how to reduce the chance you'll be a victim and find out what to do if you are during Tax Identity Theft Awareness Week. The Federal Trade Commission is hosting a series of free webinars and Twitter chats. Find out more [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

## OMB Posts Notice to Reform Requirements of Participation

The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has posted notice of a proposed rule to reform the revised federal nursing home regulations issued in 2016. This [proposed rule](#) would eliminate requirements that CMS has identified as "unnecessary, obsolete, or excessively burdensome on facilities." In the notice, CMS states



the rule "would increase the ability of healthcare professionals to devote resources to improving resident care by eliminating or reducing requirements that impede quality care or that divert resources away from providing high quality care." CMS believes that there is no other alternative than reforming the regulations and that the proposed rule will not impede resident health or safety. While there is no information indicating which parts of the revised federal regulations were identified for elimination, CMS has requested stakeholder feedback on the following areas in the past year: (1) discharge notices to ombudsmen, (2) the grievance process, and the (3) the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement process. To read the full notice on OMB's website, click [here](#). To read why the revised federal nursing home regulations are vital for nursing home residents, click [here](#).

[Back to Top](#)

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## 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:

[How to Prevent, Detect and Report Financial Exploitation in Nursing Homes](#) - This consumer fact sheet provides information on protecting yourself from financial exploitation.

[Back to Top](#)

## About The Voice

The Voice is a weekly e-newsletter, published by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care. If you do not wish to continue receiving this publication, please unsubscribe below. Your contributions and comments are welcome and should be sent to [info@theconsumervoice.org](mailto:info@theconsumervoice.org). Copyright © 2018.

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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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