



THE VOICE

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

June 25, 2019

Bill Funding Money Follows the Person Passes House

The U.S. House of Representatives passed [H.R. 3253 - Empowering Beneficiaries, Ensuring Access, and Strengthening Accountability Act](#) by a vote of 371-46. The bill will now go to the Senate. The bill includes four and a half years of funds for the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Program. As we have previously noted, MFP benefits both long-term care consumers and states. MFP helps individuals with disabilities and seniors who want to move out of nursing homes or other institutions and back into their communities, where they can live independently and experience an improved quality of life. At the same time, it helps states improve access to home and community-based long-term services and supports and save money.

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Join Us on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on July 18

Consumer Voice is hosting its first-ever summer Hill Day this year on July 18, 2019. Join with your fellow consumers, family members, and advocates for this day of advocacy in Washington, DC! We will give you the guidance and support you need to set up and conduct your own visits. [RSVP by Monday, July 8 by clicking here.](#)

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Calendar of Events

Thursday, June 27: [Palliative Care in the Continuum of Care](#), 2:30pm ET, Webinar from Quality Insights Quality Innovation Network

Hill Day 2019: 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

During the Consumer Voice Hill Day, you will meet with your members of Congress and advocate for better quality care and quality of life for nursing home residents and other long-term care consumers. Consumer Voice will provide issue briefs and talking points to help you deliver a strong message on several topics, such as preserving the revised federal nursing home regulations and increasing funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Our voices are stronger together. Don't miss this opportunity to advocate for the long-term care consumers in your state and around the country! [RSVP with this form by Monday, July 8.](#)

Annual Open House and Jackie Koenig Memorial Internship Fundraiser: 4:00 - 6:00 pm

After you've finished meeting with your members in Congress, you are invited to stop by the Consumer Voice office for our Annual Open House and Jackie Koenig Memorial Internship Program Fundraiser. Mingle with Consumer Voice staff, Board, and friends, while enjoying light refreshments.

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Materials Available from NORC Webinar on Technology and Volunteer Management

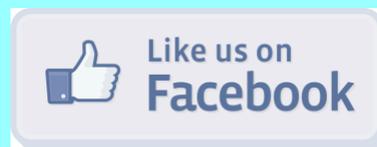
Materials are now available from the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC)'s recent webinar - [Using Technology to Recruit, Train, and Keep Volunteers in the Loop](#). This webinar is for Ombudsman programs that work with volunteers. Participants heard successful practices in using technology for recruiting, "on-boarding", training, and retaining volunteers (e.g., an informative program website, social media, video conferencing, on-demand training, etc.). For example, the speakers talked about strategies for utilizing social media to tell consumer's stories and other appealing content, to attract potential volunteers. Whether you are looking for new ways to recruit or retain volunteers, listen as speakers

Thursday, July 18: [Consumer Voice Hill Day](#), 9:00am-3:00pm, Washington, DC

October: [Residents' Rights Month](#)

November 3-6, 2019: [Consumer Voice Annual Conference](#), Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, Virginia

Join the conversation and follow us on social media!



Last Week's Most Popular Post:

Thursday, June 20:

[Because of a "processing error" from the Social Security Administration, at least 250,000 Medicare beneficiaries may receive bills for premiums they already thought they had paid.](#)



Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Thursday, June 20:

[Intimacy and Aging: Issues and Answers for Long Term Care and Home Care - new staff training video from @NCCDP](#)

share how to incorporate technology into many aspects of volunteer management.

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The Hill Event Address Prescription Drug Costs for Medicare Patients

On Tuesday June 25th, *The Hill* hosted an event titled Cost + Quality + Care: The Medicare Equation. Representatives Brett Guthrie and Doris Matsui of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee came together with health industry leaders and policy experts to discuss the rising costs of prescription drugs for Medicare patients and what strategies can be taken to address this issue.

The discussion centered around how Medicare Part D, which has remained relatively unchanged for the past 13 years, can be changed in order to make medication more affordable for the nearly 11 million low-income seniors currently relying on the program. Panelists discussed certain proposals to reduce costs, including having caps on out-of-pocket costs, the ability to space costs out overtime instead of paying up front, an option for negotiating rebates, and the need to bring manufacturers to the table to close loopholes that lead to high costs. Representative Matsui argued that getting treatments right the first time will help save money in the long-run and spoke about the need to ensure that individuals, especially the protected classes on Medicare Part D, have access to the right medications that work for them.

Dr. Mark Fendrick of the University of Michigan Center for Value-Based Insurance Design argued that there is enough money in the healthcare system, but it just needs to be spent on the right things. He said, for example, that the healthcare system must be able to identify what services are helping people and which are not, and get rid of the ones that are not useful. Representative Guthrie mentioned that he would like to see bipartisan drug pricing strategies come about this Fall.

For more about this event and to view the livestream, [click](#)

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [Stop the Trump Administration from Lowering the Poverty Threshold, Justice in Aging](#)

DONATE NOW

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

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[here](#). For more information about the Consumer Voice's advocacy involving Medicare please, [visit our website](#).

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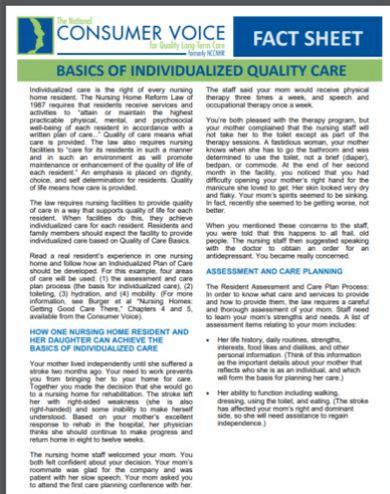
Register for the Consumer Voice Conference Now to Get the Best Possible Rates

Attended by ombudsmen and consumer advocates, residents, family members, attorneys, policy experts, and more - don't miss this important event!

- Plenary and workshop sessions address the latest issues affecting long-term care consumers
- Hear from key federal and state experts about important policy initiatives and best practices
- Network with your peers from around the country

Register now and get up to \$55 off the regular registration rate! For additional discounts, apply for a [group discount!](#) Already registered? Remember to [book your hotel room](#). For more information, [click here](#).

Spotlight on Resources



CONSUMER VOICE FACT SHEET
BASICS OF INDIVIDUALIZED QUALITY CARE

Individualized care is the right of every nursing home resident. The Nursing Home Reform Law of 1987 requires that residents receive services and activities to "obtain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of each resident in accordance with a written plan of care." Quality of care means what care is provided. The law also requires nursing facilities to "care for its residents in such a manner and in such an environment as will promote the maximum or enhancement of the quality of life of each resident." An emphasis is placed on dignity, choice, and self-determination for residents. Quality of life means how care is provided.

The law requires nursing facilities to provide quality of care in a way that supports quality of life for each resident. When facilities do this, they achieve individualized care for each resident. Residents and family members should expect the facility to provide individualized care based on Quality of Care Basics.

Read a real resident's experience in one nursing home and follow how an Individualized Plan of Care should be developed. For this example, four areas of care will be used: (1) the assessment and care plan process (the basis for individualized care), (2) toileting, (3) hydration, and (4) mobility. (For more information, see Burger, et al., "Nursing Homes: Getting Good Care There," Chapters 4 and 5, available from the Consumer Voice.)

HOW ONE NURSING HOME RESIDENT AND HER DAUGHTER CAN ACHIEVE THE BASICS OF INDIVIDUALIZED CARE

Your mother lived independently until she suffered a stroke two months ago. Your needs to visit prevented you from bringing her to your home for care. Together you made the decision to move her to a nursing home for rehabilitation. The stroke left her with "right-sided weakness" (she is now right-handed) and some inability to make herself understood. Based on your mother's excellent response to rehab in the hospital, her physician thinks she should continue to make progress and return home in eight to twelve weeks.

The nursing home staff welcomed your mom. You both felt confident about your decision. Your mom's roommate was glad for the company and was patient with her slow speech. Your mom asked you to attend the first care planning conference with her.

The staff said your mom would receive physical therapy three times a week, and speech and occupational therapy once a week.

You're both pleased with the therapy program, but your mother complained that the nursing staff did not take her to the toilet except as part of the therapy session. A fabulous woman, your mother knows when she has to go the bathroom and was determined to use the toilet, not a toilet chair, bedpan, or commode. At the end of her second month in the facility, you noticed that you had difficulty opening your mother's right hand for the manicule she loved to get. Her skin looked very dry and itchy. Your mom's spirits seemed to be sinking. In fact, recently she seemed to be getting worse, not better.

When you mentioned these concerns to the staff, you were told that this happens to all frail, old people. The nursing staff then suggested speaking with the doctor to obtain an order for an emollient. You became really concerned.

ASSESSMENT AND CARE PLANNING

The Resident Assessment and Care Plan Process: In order to know what care and services to provide and how to provide them, the law requires a careful and thorough assessment of your mom. Staff need to learn your mom's strengths and needs. A list of assessment items relating to your mom includes:

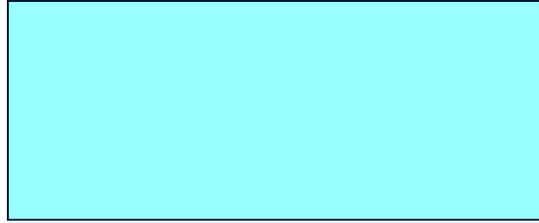
- Her life history, past and present, strengths, interests, food likes and dislikes, and other personal information. (This is of this information as the important details about your mother that affects who she is as an individual, and which will form the basis for planning her care.)
- Her ability to function including walking, dressing, using the toilet and eating. (The stroke has affected your mom's right and dominant side, so she will need assistance to regain independence.)

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 Voice](#) and [NORC websites](#) to explore all the available

resources. Check out this week's highlighted resource:

Basics of Individualized Quality Care

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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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