



THE VOICE

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

September 4, 2018

House Subcommittee Hearing Tomorrow on EMPOWER Care Act

The House Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee will hold a [hearing](#) tomorrow, Wednesday September 5th to consider the EMPOWER Care Act, which would re-authorize the Money Follows the Person program (MFP) for the next five years. The MFP program is a Medicaid program that has helped more than 75,000 long-term care consumers move from nursing homes and other institutions to the community. But the MFP program has expired, and without additional funding, every state will stop transitioning new individuals this year.

Wednesday's hearing, entitled "Opportunities to Improve Health Care" is scheduled for 10:00am ET in Room 2123 of the Rayburn House Office Building. The ACLU along with other disability and civil rights organizations are organizing a group to attend the hearing in Washington, DC. See the [Facebook event](#) for more information. Those not able to attend the hearing are encouraged to tweet your legislators, using the hashtag #FundMFP, and ask them to co-sponsor and pass the EMPOWER Care Act (S2227/HR5306). By passing the EMPOWER Care Act and funding the Money Follows the Person program, Congress can help more long-term care consumers transition out of

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nursing homes and into the homes and communities of their choice.

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House Subcommittee Hearing Thursday on Quality Care and Safety in Nursing Homes

The House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations will hold a hearing on Thursday, September 6th at 10:15am ET in Room 2322 in the Rayburn House Office Building entitled "Examining Federal Efforts to Ensure Quality of Care and Resident Safety in Nursing Homes." The hearing will explore the roles of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Office of the Inspector General relating to the management and safety of nursing home facilities. After media reports describing instances of abuse and neglect in nursing homes, particularly the incident in Hollywood Hills, Florida when 12 nursing home residents died in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, the Committee on Energy and Commerce began conducting oversight of nursing homes. The hearing will review the critical issue of emergency preparedness in long-term care facilities and CMS' oversight of national nursing homes. For more information about the hearing, click [here](#). The hearing will be livestreamed on the Committee's website - <https://energycommerce.house.gov/>.

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Updated Fact Sheet on LGBT Nursing Home Residents' Rights

Consumer Voice and NORC have updated a resource for consumers. The materials are based on Residents' Rights and achieving quality long-term care. We encourage you to share these materials with individuals receiving long-term care, family members, facility staff, and Ombudsman programs.

Wednesday, September 5: [Sexual Abuse in Nursing Homes: What You Need to Know](#), 2:00pm ET, Consumer Voice webinar

September 5-7: National Center for Victims of Crime [2018 National Training Institute](#)

Wednesday, September 12: [Using Supported Decision-Making to Avoid Guardianship: Screening with the PRACTICAL Tool](#), 2:00pm ET, Webinar from the National Center on Law & Elder Rights

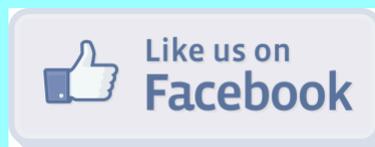
Tuesday, September 18: [Dementia Care: Opioid Use & Impact for Persons Living with Dementia](#), 1:30pm ET, Call from CMS

Tuesday, September 18: [Emergency Preparedness: Ombudsman Program Advocacy and Facility Responsibilities](#), 3:00pm ET, NORC Webinar

October: Residents' Rights Month, [Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them](#)

October 22-24: [Consumer Voice Annual Conference](#), Alexandria, Virginia

Join the conversation and follow us on social media!



Last Week's Most Popular Post:

Thursday, August 30: [Courts in Iowa have ruled that United Healthcare must pay for nursing home residents' customized wheelchairs](#)

Residents' Rights and the LGBT Community: Know Your Rights as a Nursing Home Resident - This fact sheet provides an overview of residents' rights for LGBT consumers living in long-term care. Current estimates state that 10.1 million Americans identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), with 3.8% aged 52 and older individuals identifying as LGBT. One study found that 27% of LGBT baby boomers had significant concerns about discrimination as they age and there are reports that LGBT older adults encounter violations of their rights when seeking long-term care services and supports. Share this fact sheet with consumers to ensure they know their rights.

Plus, remember to check out the newly updated worksheet - [My Personal Directions for Quality Living](#). This is an especially relevant worksheet for this year's Residents' Rights Month theme "[Speak Up: Know Your Rights and How to Use Them](#)."

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AARP Public Policy Institute Publishes State Profiles on LTSS

The AARP Public Policy Institute has published the 10th edition of its reference report on state long-term services and supports (LTSS). *Across the States 2018: Profiles of Long-Term Services and Supports* is intended to help policy makers, administrators, and stakeholders make informed decisions about LTSS public policies and programs. Topics include: age demographics and projections; living arrangements, income, and poverty; disability rates; costs of care; private long-term care insurance; Medicaid long-term services and supports (LTSS); family caregivers; home- and community-based services (HCBS); and nursing facilities. Each state profile is a four-page, user-friendly, print-ready document that provides state specific data and rankings. Find the report [here](#).

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Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Tuesday, August 28:

[Thank you, Evelyn, for speaking up in this fantastic Resident's Voice Challenge entry!](#)

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [Inspector General investigating nursing home staffing: Report, McKnight's, August 31, 2018](#)

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New Law in Massachusetts to Improve Alzheimer's Care

A new law in Massachusetts aims to improve the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's. The multi-faceted, first-in-the-nation legislation on Alzheimer's would require training for medical professionals in diagnosing, treating and care for patients with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. It would also require physicians to inform a family member or legal representative when a patient is diagnosed with Alzheimer's. The law mandates that all hospitals create a plan by October 1, 2021 for recognizing and managing patients with dementia. For more information, read the [article](#) in the *Boston Globe*.

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Spotlight on Resources



Residents' Right to Vote and Ombudsman Program Advocacy

Voter turnout among institutionalized populations is much lower than among non-institutionalized populations. As advocates, Ombudsman programs support all residents' right to vote and advocate on behalf of residents to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in the election process.

"It is imperative that ombudsmen emphasize the importance of voting to residents and staff of LTC facilities. It is a right and empowers the residents, who sometimes feel they are no longer part of the world. Voting helps to preserve dignity and keep residents engaged in life, which I feel is essential to survival" – LTC Ombudsman

Examples of how Ombudsman programs can support residents' right to vote:

- Discuss residents' rights, including the right to vote, with residents, facility staff, and family members.
- Provide information about the voting process such as when to register, how to register, how to request an absentee ballot, how to locate accessible polling places, how to find transportation to polling sites, and how to connect with outside organizations that could assist residents directly.
- Remind facility staff about their responsibility to assist residents in exercising their right to vote including finding transportation to polling sites or identifying other ways residents can cast their ballot (e.g., mobile polling, becoming a polling site).
- Create and distribute educational materials about voting rights. View examples of educational materials and activities on the NORC Voting page - <http://tombudsman.org/issues/voting>.
- Encourage resident councils to invite candidates to their meetings to speak and visit with residents.
- Investigate complaints regarding residents' rights and access to information, including the right to vote.

For more information about supporting voting rights and activities, go to www.theconsumervoice.org.

Find more information on the Consumer Voice website at www.theconsumervoice.org
Direct questions to: info@theconsumervoice.org or 302-332-2275

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:

[Residents' Right to Vote and Ombudsman Program Advocacy \(Updated August 2018\)](#)

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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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