

Who may need an ombudsman?

- **Residents** of Nursing Homes, Adult Care Homes, and Family Care Homes.
- **Family and Friends** of residents in long term care.
- **Long Term Care Facility Staff**
- **Government Agencies and Community Groups**
- **Anyone** seeking information and education regarding long term care or placement issues.

What should you do before contacting an ombudsman?

- **Be prepared.** Be organized and have your concerns written down to help you be more effective and ask the right questions.
- **Keep your own records.** Take notes or keep a journal. Remember to record dates, times, and people you spoke with regarding your concerns.
- **Be pleasant.** Getting angry or rude never helps to solve the problem.
- **Utilize the facility complaint or grievance procedure system.** If possible, try and solve complaints through the facility first.

Centralina

Area Agency on Aging Ombudsman Program

525 North Tryon Street
12th Floor,
Charlotte, NC 28202

a division of



Ombudsman services are
free and confidential.
1-800-508-5777
www.CentralinaAging.org



North Carolina Ombudsman Program

Contact your local ombudsman 1-800-508-5777



What is a long term care ombudsman?

An **Ombudsman** is an advocate for resident's rights and is responsible for investigating complaints made by, or on behalf of, nursing and adult care home residents. **Ombudsmen** work with residents, family members, concerned citizens, care facilities, and public and private agencies, to enhance the quality of life for residents in long term care.

The North Carolina Long Term Care **Ombudsman** Program, as established by the Older American's Act, operates at both state and local levels. The State Long Term Care

What does an ombudsman do?

- **Advocates for Residents** when their legal rights have been violated or they are not receiving proper care or assistance.
- **Investigates Concerns** from the residents of nursing and adult care homes, or from others on their behalf, as they relate to resident's rights, services, and benefits.
- Complaints may be against facilities, government agencies or programs, or other service providers.
- **Mediates Disputes** between long term care residents and facilities as well as private and government agencies on behalf of the residents.
- **Provides Technical Assistance** to residents, families, and staff in areas including: care planning, family and resident councils, resident transfer and discharge, long term care placement, etc.
- **Promotes Elder Abuse Awareness** within the community.
- **Monitors** long term care facilities to ensure residents' rights are not being violated.
- **Educates** the public on long term care issues and promotes increased community involvement in long term care facilities.

Ombudsman is located within the North Carolina Division of Aging & Adult Services in Raleigh. Regional Long Term Care **Ombudsmen** are part of each *Area Agency On Aging*, which are located in Lead Regional Organizations.

What are community advisory committees?

Community Advisory Committees are made up of volunteers appointed by the county commissioners. They visit facilities, interact with residents, and advocate for quality care in the homes. Each member serves terms from 1-3 years and must reside within the county that they serve.

Nursing Home Community Advisory Committees visit each nursing home every three months. They act as a supportive local committee to help maintain the spirit of the Nursing Home Resident's Bill of Rights.

Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committees visit each Adult Care Home every three months and Family Care Homes annually. They help maintain the Adult Care Home Resident's Bill of Rights.

