



A Note from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman:

Across Iowa, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, along with family members, long-term care ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff and others, will celebrate the individual rights of long-term care residents this October during Residents' Rights Month.

The annual event is sponsored by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (The Consumer Voice) to celebrate and focus on awareness of dignity, respect and the value of long-term care residents. This year's theme - "CARE Matters" - is designed to highlight the importance of quality care and its impact on the health, happiness and overall well-being of residents living in long-term care facilities.



In keeping with that theme, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman has decided to produce four short versions of The Advocate this month that focus on topics related to residents' rights that begin with the letters C, A, R and E. These special issues will be emailed each Monday in October and will hopefully provide you with an interesting discussion topic for your weekly staff meeting, spark an idea for a Residents' Rights Month activity or just make you stop and reflect for a moment on the crucial role you play in enhancing the quality of life for all the residents you serve.

Enjoy!

Deanna Clingan-Fischer, JD

"R" is for Rights

Many people incorrectly believe that when an individual moves into a long-term care facility, his or her autonomy and ability to exercise freedom of choice are somehow diminished. That is one reason why advocates across the country celebrate Residents' Rights Month each October.



By increasing public awareness of the fact that long-term care residents and tenants maintain the same rights as an individual in the larger community and that those rights are protected by federal and state law, we can begin to change the common perception that moving into a facility negatively impacts a person's ability to make choices about his or her daily life.

Among other things, residents' and tenants' rights include:

- The right to be fully informed;
- The right to complain without fear of retaliation;
- The right to participate in one's own care;
- The right to privacy and confidentiality;
- The right to dignity, respect and freedom;
- The right to visits; and
- The right to make independent choices.

Fact sheets and brochures about residents' rights and tenants' rights are available to download from the [Resource Library](#) on the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman website. For more information, contact your Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman at (866) 236-1430.

Upcoming Events & Learning Opportunities

The Call for Sessions for the 2016 Governor's Conference on Aging and Disabilities is now open! If you have a proposal that demonstrates innovative and effective methods of engaging with the aging and disability communities, we want to hear from you! Selected individuals will be invited to present at the Governor's Conference on Aging and Disabilities at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines on May 23-26, 2016.

This conference, sponsored by the Iowa Department on Aging and the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council and powered by the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD), will highlight the myriad ways Iowa's aging and disability communities are evolving and invite participants to engage in a thoughtful dialogue about the positive impacts of a society committed to independent living. Hurry - the Call for Sessions closes Nov. 9!

> [Learn more](#)

The mission of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare and rights of individuals residing in long-term care by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems and providing advocacy, with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested.

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