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Sept. 11, 2017



A note from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman:

As you may know, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman has been the subject of media attention lately stemming from concerns over budget cuts following the last legislative session. Specifically, there have been many questions raised regarding cuts to the OSLTCO's travel budget and the impact of those cuts on the ability for Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen to visit facilities around the state and advocate for residents and tenants in need.

While the intentions behind raising these concerns are good, there has been some misinformation reported, as well. As you know, the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are an incredibly passionate group of advocates who care deeply about the individuals they serve. Although the OSLTCO's fleet of vehicles was cut to save expenses, the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen are still readily available by phone, videoconferencing and other technologies and will continue to advocate on behalf of residents and tenants in all of Iowa's nursing facilities, long-term care facilities, assisted living programs and elder group homes.

Second, there is a significant difference between the roles and responsibilities of the OSLTCO and the Department of Inspections and Appeals that has recently been confusing as represented. Many media reports regarding the budget cuts have led readers or viewers to believe that Iowa's long-term care facilities will no longer be routinely inspected because the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen have given up their state-leased vehicles. Nothing could be further from the truth. The OSLTCO is not in charge of regulating complaints at nursing facilities – nor does it have the authority to cite or fine facilities. That is within the jurisdiction of the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals. Instead, the OSLTCO's primary function is to assist individuals who have filed complaints find resolution to those situations in a manner that is consistent with their needs and desires.

Finally, it is important to know that, despite budget cuts, the Volunteer Ombudsman Program remains a robust program. Volunteer Ombudsmen are trained to handle complaints and seek resolution with residents, family members and staff, and are often the "boots on the ground" when it comes to the day-to-day concerns at a facility. If a Volunteer Ombudsman is not able to find resolution to an issue, he/she will contact the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman who is assigned to that region and the matter will escalate until appropriate resolution can be agreed upon.

As always, the mission of the OSLTCO is to protect the health, safety, welfare and rights of individuals residing in long-term care facilities by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems and providing advocacy with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care. It is a mission we are proud of and one we will remain committed to, regardless of fluctuations in funding allocations and resources.

Cindy Pederson, JD
Interim State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Farewell & Best Wishes

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman would like to say farewell to two members of its staff who left the department in August.

Volunteer Ombudsman Program Coordinator Sarah Hinzman left the program after four years to return to school. She plans on attending Western Illinois University to work toward her master's degree of Fine Arts in Acting, and hopes to one day teach theater at the university level.

Additionally, VISTA VOP Coordinator Jennifer Nguyen-Vu completed her year-long contract with the department in August. We appreciate her service and wish her luck in her future endeavors!

Upcoming Events & Educational Opportunities

DHS 2017 Annual Medicaid Provider Training

Dates/Times Vary

The 2017 Annual Provider Training will primarily focus on the legislatively mandated cost containment initiatives from the State Fiscal Year 2018/19 Human Services appropriations bill (House File 653). These training sessions will be facilitated by the IME and will have representatives from the three Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) to provide updates. Sessions will be offered in nine different communities throughout the state. In each location we will offer two provider sessions. These sessions will contain the same content so please attend the session that best works for your schedule. > [Schedule](#)

Webinar: Balancing Privacy & Protection: Surveillance Cameras in Nursing Home Residents' Rooms

Sept. 12, 2017 (2-3 p.m. CT)

The use of surveillance cameras in nursing home residents' rooms is becoming more popular among some consumers and policymakers, but it comes with a range of potential positive and negative implications. Consumer Voice has developed a new fact sheet, [Balancing Privacy & Protection: Surveillance Cameras in Nursing Home Residents' Rooms](#), in partnership with The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) to present an overview of the balance between safety and security with privacy of residents and their roommates; current state laws and guidelines on surveillance cameras in residents' rooms; and important questions to consider before installing a surveillance camera. This webinar will discuss these issues in greater detail. > [Register](#)

Cross-Training: Abuse in Later Life

Oct. 3, 2017 (8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Lakeside Hotel & Casino | 777 Casino Dr. | Osceola, IA 50213

This free program is supported by the Office on Violence Against Women within the U.S. Department of Justice and is designed to help train mandatory reporters about how to detect, report and prevent elder abuse. To register, call Cheryl Ritter at (515) 281-7688.

Stealing Your Life: The Ultimate Identity Theft Protection Plan

Oct. 3, 2017 (7-8:30 p.m.)

Maytag Auditorium, Iowa Public Television | 6450 Corporate Dr. | Johnston, IA 50131

IPTV and AARP Fraud Watch Network and AARP Iowa are teaming up to present a special event that will help you identify and avoid scams and frauds. The public is invited to the IPTV studio on Tuesday, Oct. 3, for a taping of "Stealing Your Life: The Ultimate Identity Theft Protection Plan" with Frank W. Abagnale, whose exploits were depicted in the movie "Catch Me If You Can" starring Leonardo DiCaprio. Today, Abagnale is an expert on the subject of identity theft, has written three books on the subject and serves as a consultant not only to the FBI but to some of the largest companies in the world on the subject of cybercrime. Free tickets to this taping are available. > [Register](#)

Technology in Aging: Improving the Quality of Life and Care for Older Adults

Sept. 25, 2017 (9 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.)

Supertel Inn & Conference Center | 800 Laurel St. | Creston, IA 50801

Join the Iowa Department on Aging in Bettendorf on Sept. 13 and/or in Creston on Oct. 25 for the next session in its 2017 Dialogue on Aging Series. The topic for this event is "Technology in Aging: Improving the Quality of Life and Care for Older Adults" and will include thought-provoking presentations by speakers representing the [University of Iowa Barbara and Richard](#)

Csomas Center for Gerontological Excellence and the Iowa State University Gerontology Program/Human Development and Family Studies Department
Lunch is included and will feature the recognition of Iowa's centenarians - those who will be 100 years or older by Dec. 31, 2017. Cost is \$25 per person. [Register](#)

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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