

# The Advocate - December 2020



December 2020

## Note from the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

*"I asked for strength, and I received challenges to make me strong.  
I asked for wisdom, and I received problems to solve.  
I asked for prosperity, and I received skill and ability to work.  
I asked for courage, and I received danger to overcome.  
In the end... I received nothing that I wanted, and everything that I needed"— Anonymous*

Last year at this time no one could have foreseen the things humankind has gone through in 2020. As challenges do, the challenge of COVID-19 has bought out our best, and sometimes our worst. The end of this long, hard year brings hope that the recently developed COVID-19 vaccines will bring a reprieve from the dreadful impact COVID-19 has had on those living and working in long-term care facilities.

With the upcoming holidays there is an opportunity to brighten the year end for those living in long-term care. I would like to share with you a list of suggestions that the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Kim Cooper, Jennifer Golle, Melanie Kempf, Julie Pollock, Pam Railsback and Kim Weaver, have come up with to help make the holidays brighter for residents and tenants of long-term care. We hope you find these suggestions useful.

- Caroling
- "Deer hunting" like in the link to the news story from Ohio
- Gift baskets for residents/tenants
- Prescheduling virtual visits to allow residents/tenants to open gifts with loved ones
- Secret Santas
- Facebook donations for the 12 days of Christmas or Advent Calendar
- Send video cards for one on one viewing
- Decorate residents'/tenants' doorways and windows
- Play Holiday music
- Provide opportunities for religious services
- Have staff wear holiday related décor
- Serve hot chocolate and holiday themed snacks while affording time for residents/tenants to share favorite holiday memories
- Virtual holiday gathering via zoom

I would also encourage you to move heaven and earth to facilitate connection between residents/tenants and their loved ones in every way possible. Distribute treats family and friends bring for their loved ones as quickly as possible. Distribution of gifts, cards, and care packages made merrier if staff can deliver them wearing a Santa hat or reindeer antlers. Also, holiday movie viewing can be facilitated. Unlimited and frequent visitation by what ever means possible, telephone, virtual, window visits, drive by visits and in person can help ease the loneliness of residents this holiday season.

While you may be rolling your eyes and thinking we are tired, and have more than enough to do already; meeting the year end challenges presented by COVID-19 with your best efforts can make the holidays the best they can be for residents/tenants and their friends and families. And isn't that really what the holidays are about after all?

On New Year's Eve, the year end toast of a friend of mine always ends with these words, "May the next be better than the last". My wish for all of us is for 2021 to be better than 2020.

Happy Holidays.  
Cindy

Look to your trade associations for updates on vaccine distribution.



## Resident/Tenant Rights

The Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care issued a [fact sheet](#) regarding holiday visits and can be found on our Office's [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Encourage residents and tenants to connect with their loved ones during the holiday season. Since the beginning of the pandemic there has been an influx of using tablets and computers for video meetings with residents and tenants in long-term care facilities. In the midst of this one technology may be left behind. Telephone calls can mean the world to residents and tenants living in long-term care facilities especially if they are frustrated with the new technologies to try to facilitate a visit. Ensuring residents and tenants have reasonable access to a telephone and privacy to speak with whom they wish is a resident right. Residents and tenants without loved ones have an opportunity to call a member of a phone buddy program. There are numerous programs available that are identified in this [article](#).



## Resident/Tenant Health, Safety & Welfare

*The FDA grants 3B Medical Emergency Use for Lumin UV System Use in Nursing Homes, Ambulatory Care and Primary Care for SARS-CoV-2 N95 Re-Use.* N95 respirators can be cleaned and reused using Lumin UV System see this [article](#) for additional information.

There are a variety of cleaning agents and one cleaning agent beats out Lysol in its time to kill coronavirus in a lab test. TK60 is a product by R-Water that kills the virus in 30 seconds versus Lysol who kills the virus in two minutes in this [article](#).

### Technology

This bed drains away fluids such as urine to allow residents to rest without wearing adult briefs in this [article](#).

PadInMotion offers a HIPAA-compliant tablet technology, EZCall tool for skilled nursing facilities and hospitals to have patients remain in contact with their loved one in this [article](#).

LG Business Solutions USA now offers an encrypted platform to facilitate in-room video calls and communication using the existing Pro:Centric Smart Hospital TVs in this [article](#).

### Activities

Residents at a nursing facility in Blanchester, Ohio went "hunting" for deer with nerf guns in this [video](#).

Colorado based TRU Community Care teamed up with Hover Senior Living Community's skilled nursing facility to create a "hug tent" that allows visitors and residents to safely see and touch each other during the pandemic in this [article](#).

Music and dance can trigger memories. This [video](#) shows one prima ballerina remembering her Swan Lake ballet routine who is living with Alzheimer's disease.

Veterans were honored on Veterans Day with pie at CareRite Centers in New Jersey and were presented with either apple or pumpkin pie by employees in this [article](#).

Whether you are looking for different holiday ideas or want to encourage attendance to virtual events OASIS Everywhere offers free holiday events at this [website](#).



Kim Bergen-Jackson, Administrator of Oaknoll Retirement Residence in Iowa City surprised residents with ice cream delivery in a truck fashioned from a kids cardboard cut-out toy and mounted on an electric scooter.



## Involuntary Discharge

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman [COVID-19 webpage](#) links to Governor Reynold's proclamation that suspends involuntary discharges for financial reasons for residents living in nursing or residential care facilities.



## Managed Care Ombudsman Program

DHS [Information Letter](#) No. 2194-MC-FFS-CVD announced grants for ICF/D, SNF, NF, NF-MI and PMIC Providers to help offset impacts of COVID-19 pandemic.



## Volunteer Ombudsman Program

[lisa.vanklavern@iowa.gov](mailto:lisa.vanklavern@iowa.gov) or 515-971-6294 "We are your Voice for Choice-Iowa Volunteer Ombudsman Program"

### VOP Statewide Conference Call

This month's statewide call will be held on Wednesday, December 9 at 2:00 and will be presented by Alexis Hernandez, Suncrest Home Health and Hospice discussing strategies to communicate with hospice residents. If you do view a recording of a previously recorded statewide conference call be sure to email [volunteervop@iowa.gov](mailto:volunteervop@iowa.gov) to receive one hour of continuing education credit.

Connect with Lisa if you need to know how many CEUs you need in order to keep your Volunteer Ombudsman certification current by the end of the calendar year.



## Events & Educational Opportunities

### Creative Initiatives to Foster Engagement During the Holiday Season

*Not eligible for VOP CEUs*

Wednesday, Dec. 9 (12:00 pm)

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

### Free Live CE Webinar - Competencies for Phase 3 RoP: Where Are We Now?

*Not eligible for VOP CEUs*

Wednesday, Dec. 9 (1:00 pm)

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

### How to Be a Fraud Fighter

*Eligible for VOP CEUs*

Tuesday, Dec. 15 (9:00 am)

The Iowa Insurance Division is providing training on "How To Be a Fraud Fighter" where they will cover current scams happening to older Iowans and how to fight back against financial fraud. A workbook provided by Iowa Insurance Division will be sent out a week before the training.

[More Information](#) | [Register](#)

### Understanding Person-Centered Care Podcast

*Eligible for VOP CEUs*

[More Information](#)

*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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