Elder Abuse in Long Term Care Facilities

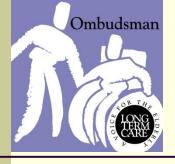


Presented by Rochelle "Shelley" Woolery Ombudsman Coordinator

Council of Aging- Orange County

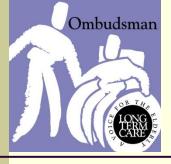
Private, non-profit corporation dedicated to promote adult empowerment, prevent abuse and advocate for the rights and dignity of those experiencing health and aging challenges.

Founded in 1973 and supported by federal and state programs, community funds, and private contributions



Long-Term Care *Ombudsman*Program

- Governed by the Older American's Act of 1978 and by California law.
- The State Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Aging administers the statewide Long-Term Care Ombudsman program through 33 Planning and Service Areas located throughout the state.
- Managed by the Council on Aging- Orange County



Long-Term Care *Ombudsman*Program

Mission Statement:

Making justice and human dignity a reality for all individuals who reside in long-term care facilities through advocacy, mediation, complaint-investigation and resolution

What Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Do

- Mandated by state and federal law to visit Orange County's licensed nursing and residential care facilities for the elderly at least once a month and investigate any suspected abuse or neglect
- Address ALL complaints from relatively minor complaints about cold food to more serious complaints about short staffing and inadequate medical care

Different Types of Facilities

- Skilled Nursing Facilities: Commonly referred to as "nursing homes," these facilities provide skilled care under the supervision of medical professionals
- Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly: Also referred to as board and care home or assisted living facilities, these facilities provide housing, meals, and personal services in a family-like atmosphere. RCFE's serve people who are no longer able to perform all their activities of daily living but who do not require medical care

Abuse in Long-Term Care Facilities

- Residents are typically very frail or disabled, and often suffer from Alzheimer's disease and other dementias... making them more vulnerable to abuse
- Offenders may be other residents, visitors (including family) or individual staff members
- May be the result of either personal characteristics (of personnel) or systemic problems (within facilities)

Types of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Verbal and Mental Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Neglect

- Self-Neglect
- Isolation and Violations of Rights
- Institutional Abuse and Neglect
- Abduction
- Abandonment

Making a Report

- Mandated reporters are required to report incidents of known or suspected abuse in two ways:
 - By telephone immediately or as soon as practically possible to local ombudsmen <u>or</u> the local law enforcement agency

AND...

By written report, Department of Social Services Form (SOC form 341) sent within two working days

Where Reports Come From

From mandated reporters, as well as family members and friends, other residents or victims

May be reported during an Ombudsman's routine visits, by phone, or by office visit

Who Investigates Reports of Abuse in Facilities?

- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Local Law Enforcement
- The Department of Justice, Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse
- Additionally, reports are sent to the individual licensing agency responsible for licensing long-term care facilities

NOTE: Adult Protective Services (APS) accepts and investigates reports of abuse and neglect to elderly and dependent adults who live in private homes and apartments

Conducting an Investigation

- The purpose of the Ombudsman's investigation is to verify abuse and focus on victim's needs
 - Ask residents for permission to collect info
 - Interview witnesses
 - Review medical records

It does NOT take the place of a criminal investigation

How to Contact an Ombudsman

- All licensed skilled nursing facilities and residential care facilities for the elderly are required by law to prominently display the Ombudsman poster listing our services and contact number:
 - **(714)** 479-0107
 - **(800) 300-6222**
 - Statewide Ombudsman toll free 24-hour CRISISline 1-800-231-4024

Things to Think about...

- US Census Bureau projects that California's elderly population will *nearly double* within the next 20 years—from 3.7 million to over 6.4 million
- More than 43 percent of all Americans over the age of 65 will reside in a nursing home sometime in their remaining lives.
- Nationally, one or every 20 elderly people will be a victim of neglect abuse each year
- More than two-thirds of abusers are family members

Questions and Answers....