

Dynamics in Memory Care

Presenters:

Patricia Hunter – Washington
State Long Term Care
Ombudsman

Stephanie Wheeler – Alaska
State Long Term Care
Ombudsman

Why this work
is important
to us?

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Alaska's Continuum of Care for Older Alaskans

Community-Based Services	Home-Based Services	Intensive Home and Community-Based Services	Services in a Residential Care Setting	Most Intensive Institutional Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Congregate Meals * Public Transportation * Information/Referral/Personal Advocacy * ADRD Education and Support * Health Promotion * Senior Employment * Independent Living Apartments * Legal Services * Senior Centers * Senior Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Home Delivered Meals * Assisted Transportation * Shopping Assistance * Home Repair * Senior Companion Volunteers *Homemaker/Chore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Adult Day Services * Counseling * Family Caregiver Support * In-Home Respite Care * Home Health Care * Hospice Care * Personal Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assisted Living Homes * Pioneers' Homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Acute Care (aka Hospital) * Nursing Home Care (aka Skilled Nursing Facility) * Residential Hospice Care
Care Coordination (Case Management): Personal Assessment/Plan of Care/Follow-Up			Long Term Care Ombudsman: Advocacy for Residents of Long Term Care Facilities	
Adult Protective Services: Investigation and Services to Abuse/Neglect Victims				
Aging and Disability Resource Centers				

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The Older Americans Act (OAA) is a key piece of legislation in the United States that supports a wide range of services for older adults. Some of the main programs and services funded under the OAA include:

Nutrition Programs	Senior Centers	In-Home Services	Transportation Services	Legal Services
Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	Caregiver Support	Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	Elder Abuse Prevention	These programs are designed to enhance the quality of life for older adults and support their independence and dignity.

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What is Licensed Long-Term Care?

Licensed long-term Care consists of homes or facilities that provide room, board and care (personal care services) for individuals 18 years of age or older.

Nursing homes (Skilled Nursing Facilities or SNFS, Rehabilitation Centers)

Assisted living facilities (Apartment like, shared spaces, meals, and activities)

Adult family homes (Residential Homes accommodating 6 to 8 individuals)

Enhanced Services Facilities (Admits only individuals with psychiatric needs- 16 beds or less)

Veteran Homes

Residential Habilitative Centers (RHCs)



Cost of Care National Average (2024)

Nursing Home – Private Room
- \$127,750.00

Nursing Home – Semi -
Private Room - \$111,325.00

Assisted Living Home -
\$70,800.00

In Home Care – Varies

What is a Long-Term Care **Ombudsman?**



Introduction of the LTC Ombudsman Program

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The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)

- Our Purpose: Promote and Protect the legal rights of long-term care (LTC) residents.
- LTC Residents are individuals who live in licensed long term care settings such as nursing homes, assisted living and adult family homes
- Approximately 97,000 care beds and 6,200 facilities in WA State.
- Alaska has approximately 6000 beds and 814 facilities
- The program is Independent in WA, located and operated outside of state government
- Alaska, the program is structured within State Government- the Department of Revenue – Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority,

The LTC Ombuds Role:



Protect and Promote the Rights of long-term care Residents (Authority and mandates are under state and federal laws)



Complaint finding and resolution



Advocating on behalf of long-term care residents



Educating others: residents, families, providers, policymakers, media and public



Systems change advocate working to improve the overall system of long-term care (legislative, rules, policies)

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What we do:

Investigate complaints made by or on behalf of long-term residents

Work to resolve problems at the lowest level to the Satisfaction of the resident

Provide consumer education about long-term care, choices and options

Information, referral and problem solving

Provide technical support to resident and family councils



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Definition: Vulnerable Adult

- Someone who is unable to care for themselves due to mental, physical, or functional limitations. This includes:
- People who are 60 or older and are unable to care for themselves
- People with a developmental disability
- People who receive services from a home health agency, hospice, home care agency or individual provider
- People who self-direct their care and receive services from a personal aide
- People who are in a facility, such as a nursing home, assisted living facility, or adult family home

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Our Authority to Act:

Federal laws (Older American's Act, 45 CFR Part 1324 Subpart A)

Authority and mandates are under state laws (WA: RCW 43.190, WAC 365.18.060) and (Alaska State Statutes Title 47.62)

Access to facilities

Private access to residents

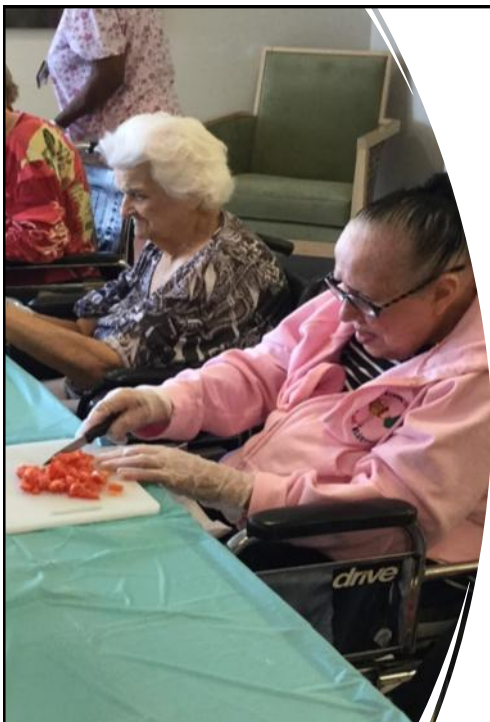
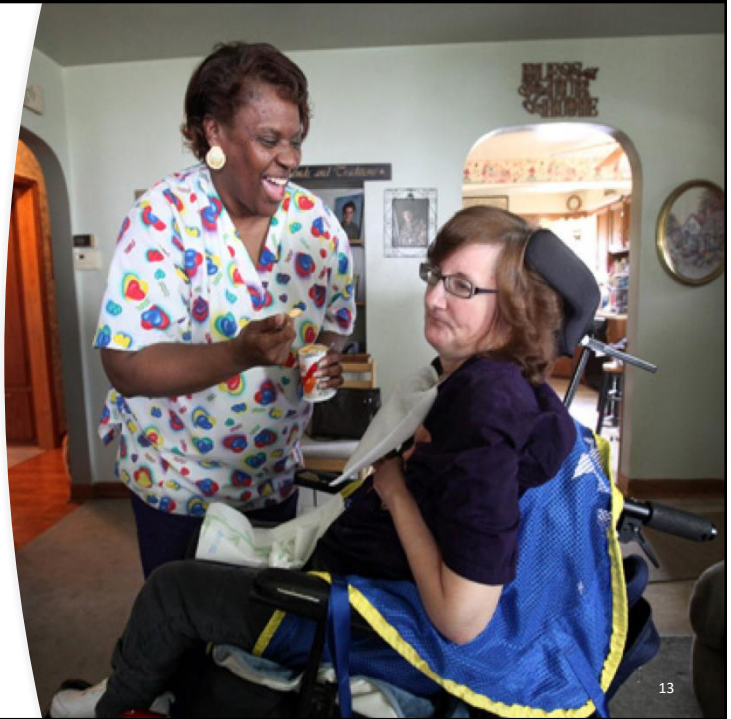
Access to records

"Unusually strict" disclosure laws

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We have broad Mandates:

- **To protect:**
 - Health
 - Safety
 - Welfare
 - Rights



Unique Attributes:

- Governed by federal and state laws
- But not part of government (Independent)
- Not neutral – always on resident's side
- Not mandated Reporters

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Residents Rights

- Long-Term Care Residents have an extra set of Rights in addition to existing rights in the USA.
- These extra rights are called “Residents Rights” and are protected by federal and state laws (vary by setting type by state).
- The long-term care facility has a duty to promote and protect all rights of residents.
- By exercising their Rights, residents can ensure that they have the quality of care and life they want and need.



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Residents Rights give Residents a Say:

- Congress created the Residents Rights laws recognizing the power imbalance between residents and staff.
- Congress also recognized that most nursing homes operate in rigid ways that works for them and making the resident “fit in”.
- Federal Residents Rights cover all nursing homes, and in some states there are state laws to cover other types of settings. In Washington the Residents Rights law is under RCW 70.129.

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Residents Rights

Make
Complaints

Privacy

Manage
Finances

To be
Informed

Access

Choices

Dignity

Right to
Remain

<https://youtu.be/34Z0LYhLtl8> Residents Rights Training Online.
Laws: RCW 70.129; 42 CFR Part 483 for a complete list of Residents Rights

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Resident Right to Privacy (more detail)

- Privacy
 - A right to privacy in communication- Oral, written, or electronic with any person of the resident's choice
 - In personal, financial, or medical areas
 - During treatment and care of the resident's personal needs



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Resident Right to be Fully Informed (more detail)



- Risks and benefits of proposed care treatment, and alternatives
- Changes to the plan of care
- Changes in medical or health status
- Notices in a language and formats understood by the resident (ex. Spanish, Braille, Font size, ASL., etc.)
- Access to personal and medical records
- Resident to be given the name and contact information for their doctors, specialists and the relevant agencies, and;
including the state regulatory agency that oversees the facility and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Residents Right to Dignity (more details)

- Right to dignity and respect
- Equal access to quality of care
- Free from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- A safe environment
- Free from physical and chemical restraints



QUESTIONS?



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Common Complaints Received



- Gross Neglect/Poor Care
- Involuntary Discharge and Evictions
- Lack of dignity, respect by staff
- Medication errors/omissions, administration issues
- Billing errors, No notice given, increases in charges
- Failure to assess resident or failure to follow plan of care
- Abuse, neglect, and exploitation
- Residents Rights, choice, visitation, autonomy
- Dietary needs, poor food quality, or failure to provide

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Most Frequent Complaints – SNF National Data Comparison Chart

Most Frequent Complaints Nursing Facility 2019	Nursing Facility 2024	Nursing Facility 2025
Discharge or eviction	Discharge or eviction	Discharge or eviction
Response to requests for assistance	Response to requests for assistance	Response to requests for assistance
Dignity and respect	Physical abuse	Medications
Personal property	Care planning	Care planning
Staffing	Symptoms unattended	Dignity and respect

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Most Frequent Complaints – RCC National Data Comparison Chart

Most Frequent Complaints Residential Care Community 2019	Residential Care Community 2024	Residential Care Community 2025
Discharge or eviction	Discharge or eviction	Discharge or eviction
Food services	Medications	Medications
Staffing	Food services	Food services
Medications	Staffing	Rights and preferences
Personal property	Physical abuse	Care planning

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Call the State LTC
Ombudsman Program



1-800-562-6028
Toll-Free Line

NOTICE

Concerned about abuse, neglect or
violation of resident rights?

Report Online:
www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/reportadultabuse

Call:
**Aging & Long-Term Support
Administration**
1-800-562-6078

TTY Users 1-800-737-7931

If you need help in resolving any problems or questions licensed
long-term care facilities, contact the State Ombuds:

1-800-562-6028

February 2017



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Alaska's State LTC Ombudsman Program

DO YOU NEED HELP?

DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN?

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

AS OMBUDSMEN WE...

Advocate for older Alaskans

Make regular Visits to facilities

Educate older Alaskans about their rights

Assist older Alaskans in Resolving Issues



FOR FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELP:

Alaska Long Term Care Ombudsman

3745 Community Park Loop, Suite 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

(907) 334-4480
(800) 730-6393 toll free
Email: akoltco@alaska.gov

Visit our website at:
www.akoltco.org

File a complaint by phone, in person, in writing, or online on our website.



The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Vital Resident Advocacy

What does the long-term care Ombudsman program do?

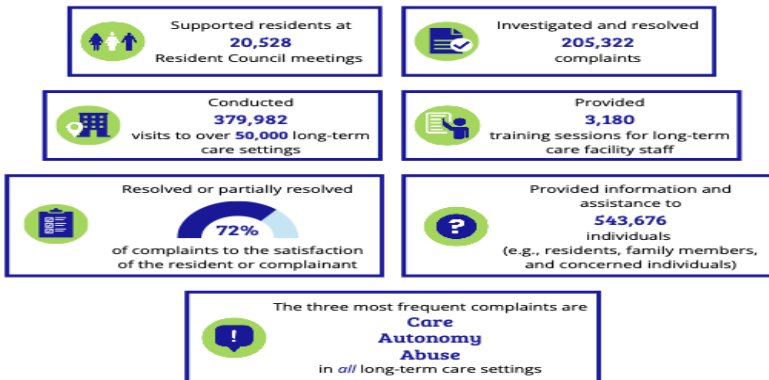
The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program (LTCOP) advocates for individuals residing in nursing facilities and residential care communities, such as assisted living facilities and board and care homes. They resolve problems that impact residents' rights, quality of life, and quality of care, and work to improve policies at the local, state, and national levels.

[Ombudsmen] are our first line of defense when we have issues that we can't resolve. They educate us, stand up for us, and sometimes just listen.

Ray, Nursing Home Resident

The Ombudsman Program by the Numbers

In 2024, the program:



Statistics are based on federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024 NORS Data (October 1, 2023- September 30, 2024).
theconsumervoice.org

Ensure Continuity of Care, Services and Supports

- Challenges of moving from Home Environment to Long Term Care Settings –
 - Familiar surroundings
 - Familiar people/loved ones
 - Routines
 - Medical knowledge
 - Family/loved one as caregivers (Circle of Love)

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Transition between communities of support/care

- 29 communities of the 169 communities have LTC facilities
- 82% of Alaska's communities are not connected to the road system
- Boat or plane travel
- Medical Care – Community Health Aides in some communities



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Licensed Care Settings

Memory Care defined (Washington and Alaska)

Staffing standards or other standards in federal/state law

Types of typical services offered

Description of the environment

Staffing, staff training and supervision

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Definitions of Memory Care

- WA State -a specialized form of long-term care for individuals living with progressive memory loss or dementia, traditionally recognized through the presence of **restricted egress** and specialized service packages.18.20.540
- Alaska - specialized type of support for seniors with Alzheimer's or dementia to include a range of state –regulated facilities offering tailored care and secure environments.

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Dynamics in Memory Care

- Residents Rights, Safety and the Right to Autonomy
- Decision Making
- Person Centered Care Approach
- Behaviors, Needs and Challenges
- Family Dynamics
- Safety and Environmental Adaptations
- Communication
- Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
- The Future of Technology in Memory Care
- Cultural Considerations
- The Importance of Community Engagement

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Risks for discharge?

Behavioral challenges leading to transfers and discharges

- Transfer to emergency rooms or acute care hospital stay
- Resident to resident violence, aggression
- Resident to caregiver violence
- Refusal to accept care or treatments
- Family or resident representative advocacy viewed as complaints
- Fear of retaliation
- Poor communication leading to misunderstandings and conflict

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Dynamics in Memory Care in Tribal Communities

- Preference is to age in place
- Education and Awareness
 - Family and Friends – Awareness
 - Intergeneration support
- Cognitive Screening - Accessible
- Culturally Responsive Care
- Routine – daily living
- Health Inequities
- Trust
- Access to HCBS to address barriers
- Community engagement

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Alaska's Advocacy Efforts

- Alaska Dementia Action Collaborative Roadmap/Vision
- BOLD Efforts - DPH
- Legislation (CNA Training)
- UAA – CHD – Trainings (Community and one on one for ALHs)
- Alaska Resource Guide for Caregivers
- Residential Complex Care Setting
- Outreach to Rural Alaska – increase AL in rural Alaska
- Technology
 - Alaska LifeSavers Project

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Building a Dementia Capable Workforce



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Washington State's Advocacy Efforts

- Dementia Action Collaborative – Description
- Dementia Training STAR for family caregivers
- Early-Stage Programming (Alzheimer's Association, Harborview in Seattle)
- Dementia MAP (Soo Borson/UW)
- Project ECHO
- Age and Dementia Friendly Communities/AARP
- Legislation RCW xXXXX

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Alaska's Advocacy Efforts

- Alaska Dementia Action Collaborative – Roadmap/Vision
- Dementia Education and Prevention Program - DPH
- Legislation (CNA Training)
- UAA – CHD – Trainings (Community and one on one for ALHs)
- Alaska Resource Guide for Caregivers
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- Technology
 - Alaska LifeSavers Project

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Resources

- Washington State
 - Project ECHO: (<https://depts.Washington.edu/mbwc/resources/echo>)
 - Dementia Action Collaborative – Dementia Road Map: A Guide for Family and Care Partners (<https://www.dshs.wa.gov>)
 - Washington State Chapter of Alzheimer's Association (<https://www.alz.org/alzwa>)
- Alaska
 - Dementia Action Collaborative A Call for Action: 10-year Road Map to address Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (<https://akoltco.org>)
 - Caregiver's Resource Guide (<https://akoltco.org>)
 - Project Lifesaver Alaska (<https://www.projectlifesaver.org>)
 - Healthy Brain Initiative: Roadmap for American Indian and Alaska Native Peoples (<https://www.cdc.gov>)
 - The Guide Program (<https://www.cms.gov>)
 - Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska (www.alzalaska.org)
 - Provider Toolkit
 - Dementia Care in Alaska ECHO 2026

Resources



The Consumer Voice For Quality Long-Term Care/Find a LTC Ombudsman

www.theconsumervoicel.org

Eldercare Locator

Website: eldercare.acl.gov (search by zip code, city, or topic)

Phone: 1-800-677-1116 (Monday-Friday, 8 AM–9 PM ET)

Support: Offers live chat, email, and TTY/video phone options for deaf/hard of hearing

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Advocacy for the LTC Ombudsman Program Strengthening the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program: Protect Vital Resident Advocacy

As Congress works on crafting the FY2026 budget, the time is now to educate members about the importance of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) and encourage them to increase program funding to ensure the rights and safety of individuals residing in long-term care facilities. After an initial proposal that would have eliminated the LTCOP, the Administration's [current budget request](#) recommends flat funding at FY25 levels (\$21.885M). Without additional investment, however, the program's capacity to investigate increasingly complex care complaints and address systemic care issues continues to be strained.

We are calling on Congress to appropriate for the LTCOP:

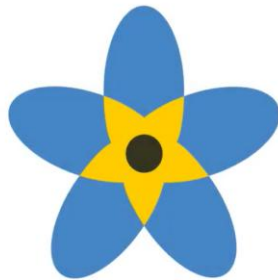
- \$70 million for core LTCOP funding under Title VII of the Older Americans Act;
- \$65 million for ombudsman services in assisted living facilities; and
- \$52.5 million under the Elder Justice Act for training and services

[SEND A MESSAGE TO CONGRESS IN SUPPORT OF THE LTCOP](#)

[SHARE YOUR STORY ABOUT HOW THE LTCOP HAS IMPACTED YOU](#)

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The River: A story about Dementia



Dementia Friends

for American Indian
& Alaska Native
Communities



A Dementia Friendly America initiative

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Thank you!

Stephanie Wheeler

Alaska State LTC Ombudsman

Email: Stephanie.Wheeler@alaska.gov

Phone: 907-334-4483

Patricia Hunter

Washington State LTC Ombudsman

Email: stateombuds@mschelps.org

Phone: 253-838-6810

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Questions



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