

Minutes: VOP Statewide Conference Call
July 22, 2015; 2:00-3:15pm
Topic: OSLTCO Updates

Attendance

Staff

- Deanna Clingan-Fischer, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Cairn Reisch, VISTA VOP Coordinator
- Sarah Hinzman, VOP Coordinator
- Meredith Funke, VISTA VOP Coordinator

Volunteer Ombudsmen

- David Arthur
- Diane Kleckner
- Janice Frey
- Judy Staack
- Julie Elmore
- Maria Montoya
- Marilyn Spangler
- Shirley Sorenson
- Terry Hornbuckle

Purpose of this call and future calls

The purpose of the VOP Statewide Calls is to increase the opportunity for continuing education provided from the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and to increase volunteer engagement. Additionally, we can go into depth on topics that we didn't have time to cover extensively in training.

Statewide conference calls will be held every odd month (May, July, September, etc.) at 2 p.m. and will be facilitated by one VOP Coordinator and one other staff member of the Office on rotation.

Each month's topic is intended to take a closer look at the particulars of resident's rights. Today we will be taking a look behind the scenes of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman with the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Deanna Clingan-Fischer.

Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OSLTCO)

Mission

The mission of the OSLTCO 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

Staff Structure

The OSLTCO consists of the state long-term care ombudsman; local long-term care ombudsmen; volunteer coordinators; volunteers; AmeriCorps VISTA members; a discharge specialist; a policy coordinator; and administrative support.

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Deanna Clingan-Fischer

Implement and follow up on the mandates outlined in the Older Americans Act

Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen (LLTCO)

Tonya Amos, Kim Cooper, Jennifer Golle, Melanie Kempf, Julie Pollock, Pam Railsback, Stacia Timmer, Kim Weaver

Investigate and work to resolve resident complaints and concerns; provide guidance to residents, families, and facilities on the rules in facilities; assist Volunteer Ombudsmen

Legal Services Developer/Policy Coordinator

Paige Thorson

Develop administrative rules and policies we need to fulfill our mandate

Discharge Specialist

Cindy Pederson

Handle notices of involuntary discharges from facilities and facility closures

Project Specialist

Merea Bentrott

Data collection; showing our impact in numbers and visuals; budget; background in sexual expression rights of residents

Administrative Support

Katie Mulford, Pat Wyatt

Volunteer Coordinators

Sarah Hinzman, Cairn Reisch (VISTA), Meredith Funke (VISTA)

Volunteer Ombudsman recruitment, intake, and support; program development

OSLCTO Updates

1. Legislation

Happy to report that our office has received additional provisions and tasks. Thank you to all of the volunteers who reached out to your legislators.

Senate File 505 (Health and Human Services Budget) was signed July 2, 2015. This included \$127,468 for our office to maintain our current efforts, along with funding to employ two additional Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen to focus on providing assistance and advocacy services to Medicaid recipients.

Our office will also work collaboratively with the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) to develop a cost allocation plan requesting Medicaid dollars – a potential funding stream for ombudsman activities.

Lastly, the OSLCTO is spearheading the Health Consumer Ombudsman Alliance. This collaboration will develop a proposal for how to provide a permanent coordinated system of independent consumer supports to ensure that consumers are provided unbiased information.

2. LLTCO

Our eight LLTCO made 465 complaint visits and 221 non-complaint related visits. They are very busy providing education, outreach, and consultations to individuals (nearly 700) and to facility staff.

3. Discharge Specialist

Cindy educates those faced with involuntary discharges; what rights the residents have. Common reasons for involuntary discharges are financial-related issues, level of care concerns, and behavioral problems. The goal is to resolve the issues so it does not result in a discharge – unless this is what the resident wants. Involuntary discharges work in a tight time frame. If you are hearing scuttle or concerns about an involuntary discharge, let your VOP Coordinator know right away. If a facility tries to give you the notice, advise them to send it to our office.

As of July 17, 2015, she has received 238 notices. Her process is to first contact the facility to inquire about the circumstances of the discharge. Then contact the resident/tenant or family member to discuss what this means and what rights the resident/tenant has.

Cindy also steps in when facilities close. She helps with the transition of residents to a new, safe environment.

4. Grants

The OSLTCO currently has two grants that we have utilized to provide information and educate people so they know their rights.

The Civil Money Penalty (CMP) grant has allowed us to create and distribute brochures on a wide variety of long-term care topics to all facilities across the state. These topics include the Volunteer Ombudsman Program, Long-Term Care Payment Options, Sexuality & Aging, Financial Exploitation, and many more. Electronic copies can be found [here](#) on our website. Each facility should have a kiosk full of these brochures – volunteers can help us ensure that they are stocked and in an accessible location for families and residents. Facilities can order more brochures by calling our office (an online order form will be available soon).

5. Resources in Facilities

The law requires facilities to post the contact information for our office, as well as other resources provided. For example, facilities should display [this](#) information on agencies in Iowa that are available to assist residents, tenants, and/or family members.

6. [Annual Report](#)

The OSLTCO is required by law to submit an annual report to the Governor. This report details all of the activities of the office, recommendations for the future, resources, and cases and complaint data.

The report for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 included a new section about the VOP. This is why volunteer monthly reports are so important. That data is aggregated and used to help show the impact of the program. Next year, the VOP content is expected to grow to include stories, scenarios from the Volunteer Ombudsmen, etc.

Highlights: volunteers provided over 2,000 hours of service; LLTCO handled over 1,000 complaints and provided over 6,600 hours of advocacy services.

Reviewing of the annual reports (FFY 2012-2014 can be found on our website) counts towards VOP continuing education requirements.

Volunteer Introductions

Each attendee introduced themselves and the facility where they serve as the Volunteer Ombudsman

Diane Kleckner – Exira Care Center in Audubon

Janice Frey – Briarwood in Iowa City

Judy Staack – All American Care and Lutheran Living in Muscatine

Terry Hornbuckle – Wesley Park Centre in Newton

David Arthur – The Rehab Center of Des Moines

Julie Elmore – Martin Health Care in Cedar Falls

Marilyn Spangler – Manorcare (Locust Street) in Davenport

Shirley Sorenson – Deerfield Retirement Community

Maria Montoya – Rockwell Community Nursing Home in Rockwell

Q&A

Roommate issues and possible remedies were discussed.

VOP Updates

Updated website includes the OSLTCO Resource Library

- <https://www.iowaaging.gov/long-term-care-ombudsman/osltco-resource-library>
- Materials developed by our staff
- Report time spent to your Coordinator for VOP continuing education

Reminders

Visits to your facility should be unannounced. You do not need to let your VOP Coordinator, your point of contact (POC), or any other facility staff know beforehand that you will be making a visit.

All communication with your POC or with the Department of Inspections and Appeals (DIA) must be verbal. You can leave a note for your POC stating that you would like to meet with them in person or connect over the phone to share information.

If you are interested in educating facility staff about our office, residents' rights, or other topics, please contact your Coordinator, who will then contact the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LLTCO) and discuss options.

When completing monthly reports, please include the status of any concerns. This is helpful for us to see where things are on the path to resolution. For example, answering questions such as:

- Do you have permission to take concern to your POC?
- Did you discuss concern with POC?
- Was there any discussion about next steps or how to resolve concern?
- Will you follow up next visit?