

# **Alabama Medicaid Agency**

## **Long Term Care Division**

### **Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

#### Overview

Clients of residential facilities in the State of Alabama, as well as their family members, sometimes lack the necessary information to assure the continued well being and safety of their loved ones.

It is imperative that there remains a coordination of efforts to keep both parties informed and well educated on the policies and procedures associated with nursing home care. Additionally, there should remain provisions for complaints, if any, to be followed to resolution, which is the best interest of the client and the family. It is through a Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program that the aforementioned assurances may be maintained.

An Ombudsman is a specifically trained advocate who is given authority under federal and state law to investigate and resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, long-term care.

The Alabama Medicaid Agency, in collaborative effort with the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) will work to make Alabama Nursing Homes better for the elderly. ADSS will administer the program with the following activities performed by the State Ombudsman:

- Investigate complaints of poor patient care;
- Investigate complaints regarding quality of care of issues about a facility's structure;
- Provide direct client advocacy;
- Makes quarterly client visitations to each facility;
- Visit long term care facilities routinely to talk to residents and monitor conditions;
- Guides clients/families through the long term care system;
- Represent clients' interests before state government officials by working to change laws, regulations and policies that affect those receiving long term care services;

#### Program Start Date

August 1, 2002

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Population Served

Individuals residing in a nursing home and other residents of long term care Medicaid facilities

Age Requirement

No age requirement

Financial Eligibility

None

Expected Ratio of Ombudsman to Recipients/Beds

1:1,000

Current Number of Ombudsman in the State

20.30 Lead Ombudsmen in 13 Areas on Aging Agencies  
A total of 20.30 certified Ombudsman in the State

Services Provided

No services provided-Administrative Reimbursement Only

Operating Agency

Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS)