

Ombuddy Review

If you know someone in a long-term care facility, you ought to know us....

October 2009

Mission:
to actively promote standards of excellence in advocacy and enhancement of the quality of life for residents of long-term care facilities in San Mateo County.

Vision:
The long-term care facilities in our county are the best in the country and reflect the high standards of resident centered care.

Values:
to cherish our Ombudsmen, to fully and faithfully empower our clients, and to positively work with all community stakeholders.



From the Desk of the Director .

California has always been known for being on the cutting edge -- in so many arenas it is on the cusp of what is new and what is exciting. The amazing diversity of our population has always made this a state where new ideas arise and, if worthy, are eagerly adopted. In my opinion, it is a state that has early embraced the idea of equality and dignity of people who come from all nations and all walks of life.

But for reasons that elude me, those are not principles that we see extended to elders in California's long-term care facilities. A recent article published by California Healthcare Foundation shows that 42% of California long-term care facilities are well behind the national average on a multitude of measures. It is hard to understand, for example, why California has dismally failed to embrace culture change, the resident-centered care approach to care.

Having said that, I do want to applaud **all** our nursing homes for committing to reduce the use of restraints with their residents. In San Mateo County, only 3.8% of all nursing home residents are restrained -- BELOW the national average of 4% -- a huge accomplishment given that California as a whole had the highest restraint rate in the nation. We want to celebrate each of their achievements and partner with our facilities to move onwards and upwards to a time when our new vision (see column on the left) will indeed be true of all the facilities in our county.

Board Gem



Meet Marianne Mannia, Board President, and a true gem. Marianne started adult life as an RN and has transitioned through various careers, at one time as the owner/operator of a pre-school in San Carlos. In recent years her passion and her energy have been directed towards aging issues. She has chaired the San Mateo County Commission on Aging, served as a Senator in the California Senior Legislature and for years has worked on access to transportation for seniors. We are indeed fortunate to count her as one of our own.

Pet peeve: Seniors who have the ability and the time and who are not engaged on the issues. And by the way, she is an excellent cook.

Road to Excellence

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes is a coalition-based, industry driven campaign to improve the quality of life and care for residents in nursing homes across the country. Compared to national results for 19 measures of quality of care published on the website of the Center for Medicare and Medical Services, California nursing homes perform below average on nearly half the measures. Every nursing home may participate in the campaign by voluntarily pledging to focus on three or more quality indicators. Nursing homes that participate get free access to assistance and information from quality experts to help them meet their targeted goals. The majority of resources are available through the campaign's website at www.nhqualitycampaign.org.

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County is actively engaging in dialogue with nursing homes in our county to promote the campaign. Four of the nursing homes have signed on. Joseph Aguiar of Atherton Healthcare in Menlo Park said he could not find one good reason not to sign on.

The campaign is encouraging all concerned citizens to enroll and participate to improve quality in our skilled nursing facilities. Use the link above for further information.

And the good news is



The Governor signed AB 392 into law in August, assigning \$1.6M in urgency funding to the local ombudsman programs. This money replaces a portion of what was lost in the earlier cuts to the program by the state. However, it is one-time funding only. We must still work to find a longer, more sustainable solution to the funding crisis, but it is indeed a good start. The local programs have worked tirelessly to bring this about, backed by a strong group of partner agencies working side by side on aging issues.

And there's more....

Thanks to a federal ruling in the matter of Brantley v. Maxwell Jolly, the cuts made to services provided by adult day health care programs have been reinstated. The cuts that would have reduced benefits from 5 to 3 days a week have been rescinded. All those pre-approved at the 5 day level will continue to receive those benefits.

It was anticipated that the intended cuts would result in an increase in placements in the long-term care facilities.

Facility Corner



Sandy Herrick, Lloyd Anderson, Earle Davie and Robert Grimes

The happy group of artists in the picture are active members of the Burlingame Long Term Care art program. Kudos to them and other residents for all the accolades they have received for their art work, and to the staff that helped it happen. Sandra Kissoon, Deputy Director of Long-term Care and Chief Nursing Officer at the facility congratulated the staff for "assisting residents to achieve their maximum potential as they 'live' with us in long-term care."

Be sure to check out the exhibit at the Hillsdale Shopping Center between Oct 1 and Oct 26.



Emergency Planning Services Offered to Facilities by OSSMC

Traditionally, our core work -- to receive complaints made by or on behalf of residents in the long-term care facilities, to investigate and resolve those complaints -- is tantamount to putting out fires on a continual basis. We are so glad to now have an opportunity to be proactive, and to offer our facilities a service that will not only benefit the facility and the residents, but also the community at large.

We have developed a position for an **Emergency Planner** and are pleased to announce that our very own **Sheri Ross** has stepped up to the task. Working closely with a variety of community stakeholders such as the two licensing bodies, the county's emergency management planners, as well as the Red Cross and Thrive Alliance, Sheri is fast getting to know all the key players as she maps out a strategy before taking this to the facilities. Initially she plans to work closely with a small group of 10 facilities of varying sizes to implement a pilot project. We anticipate that it will be ready to roll out to the larger community of facilities in May 2010, and we plan to introduce it at our May afternoon tea event. Mark your calendars! This will be an opportunity for facilities to learn how to respond to a variety of potential emergencies ranging from the flu to earthquakes.

An Invitation for Facility Administrators

What: Afternoon Tea with your Ombudsman

When: November 12, 2009
3:00 to 5:00

Where: Veterans Memorial Senior Center
1455 Madison Ave, Redwood City

CEUs approved for administrators of skilled nursing homes and residential care facilities and RNs. Certificates available for CNAs.

Come and learn why good oral hygiene is so critical to basic well-being

Trends in Long-term Care: Transitioning

In 1999, the Supreme Court, rejected the state of Georgia's appeal to enforce institutionalization of individuals with disabilities, in its 6-3 ruling against the state of Georgia, affirming the right of individuals with disabilities to live in their community. This decision, known as The Olmstead Decision, has had far reaching implications in the long-term care industry. Essentially we are seeing states recognize the rights of disabled individuals to live in the least restrictive environment possible.

Across the U.S. we have seen a wave of people, who are on Medicaid and have been living in nursing homes, transitioning *from* these homes into less restrictive and less costly environments, either to assisted living facilities or back home with in-home supportive services (IHSS). But the states where this is happening ensure that the money follows the individual. Thus, a person who is on Medicaid in a nursing home can go to an assisted living facility and Medicaid will pay -- or they may even go home and Medicaid will pay for IHS services. Various states have set up ways for this to happen. But... not in California. In California, one could say we see the reverse happening. When people in assisted living homes have burned through their assets, assuming they qualify medically, we immediately get them MediCal certified and transition them *into* nursing homes. OSSMC would like to see the state of California moving to rectify this gross misuse of MediCal money, especially in times when we are faced with severe budget crises. Our frail elders, after all, have the right to live in the least restrictive environment possible. And besides, it would be far more cost effective.


Remarkable Centenarian: At 104, R. Waldo McBurney maintains a downtown office in Quinter, Kansas where he sells honey from his 199 colony of bee hives. He still competes in several track events in the Senior Olympics. In 2004 he came out with his first book, *My First 100 Years*. (Excerpt from The Defy Aging Newsletter.)



Non-Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
San Mateo, CA
Permit No. 13

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

SAVE THE DATE
The Grape Escape: A Culinary Caper
The Hiller Aviation Museum
Saturday, May 22, 4 pm



volunteer

I would like to

Tax Deductible Donation: \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

In Memory/Honor of _____

Please make checks payable to Ombudsman Services and mail to 711 Nevada Street, Redwood City, CA 94061
Your donation is tax deductible: EIN No. 94-3397402