

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### Independent Office of the Ombudsman

#### Annual Report 2009-2011

The Independent Office of the Ombudsman (hereafter referred to The Office) continued to visit nursing homes to make certain the most vulnerable population of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) received essential services and supports. Most, if not all, consumers' receiving DDS services requiring acute care and rehabilitation reside at Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs). Additionally, some stakeholders reside in nursing homes or long-term care facilities (LTCs).

During the 2009 calendar year, the Office completed visits to all DDS consumers residing in Skilled Nursing Facilities and Long-Term Nursing Facilities.

The Office of the Ombudsman implemented additional oversight and advocacy for consumers receiving services from the Department of Developmental Services. Stakeholders and/or their guardians spoke with the Office about various issues pertaining to the care and treatment they were receiving at these facilities. Guardians for DDS consumers requested that the Office look into specific issues regarding treatments. Oftentimes, DDS case managers called the ombudsman seeking assistance in obtaining and continuing physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy and or other treatments.

Furthermore, the Office advocated for several consumers who expressed a desire to live in the community. The Office made several recommendations to move consumers into the community from nursing homes. Fortunately, the majority of the Ombudsman's recommendations were met. Some individuals moved into community living arrangements (CLAs), community-training homes (CTHs) and in some cases back into their family residences. Collaborating with DDS and the Department Of Social Services allowed these individuals to use money follows the person (MFP) to move out of these restrictive environments and live more independently. From 2009 to 2011 approximately 25 requests were made by the Ombudsman's Office to move consumers, who were deemed to be placed inappropriately in long-term nursing facilities, into the community or with proper supports back into the family home.

## Executive Summary

### SNF Oversight – Findings & Recommendations

The Independent Office of the Ombudsman completed its review of visiting with all Department of Developmental Services stakeholders residing in long-term care facilities and skilled nursing facilities.

Stakeholders and/or guardians despondent with the current living arrangements were spoken to about different options available for living in the community including their family homes. Consumers who met criteria for living in the community were discussed with the DDS OBRA Nurse regarding the appropriateness of moving into a placement that would give them increased independence.

#### *Recommend:*

- Meet with OBRA coordinators to discuss using standardized DDS consumer checklists that Ombudsman Office prepared for review during visits.
- Meet with Department of Social Services (DSS) Money Follows the Person (MFP) administrator.
- Meet with Department of Social Services Alternative Care staff.
- Coordinate with DDS Central Office (CO) utilization nurse to coordinate visits at specific Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF).
- Meet with CO utilization nurse to discuss any issues or problems encountered during visits at SNF's.

#### Update:

Spoke with case manager about using money follows the person (MFP) when a more appropriate placement in the community is found.

Recommended additional social activities geared for younger individuals residing at long-term facilities. Some activities would require transportation to and from activities. Spoke with town Dial-A- Ride coordinators.

#### Recommendation:

Long-Term Care Nursing Facilities, SNF's and Hospital staff are not inclined to understand the legal rights of guardianship, the role of an advocate or the importance that DDS consumers place on friendship and loyalty. Long-term care facilities, skilled nursing facilities & hospitals need a refresher on DDS Guardianship and advocacy to assist with moving individuals into the community.

#### Update:

I met with The Department of Social Services, Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office, about providing training for care of DDS consumers with special needs and/or behavioral issues. The Department of Social Services, LTC Regional Ombudsman currently gives training courses to CNAs for Alzheimer's, Parkinson and dementia patients. The Office requested and they agreed to provide training in Guardianship and advocacy for DDS consumers.

## Conclusion:

In 2011, a paradigm shift of moving more individuals out of nursing homes and into the community was seen. More individuals residing in nursing homes were being considered for moves into the community and in some cases back to their family residences. The Department of Social Services money follows the person program (MFP) greatly assisted in funding many of these moves. While placing some consumers in long-term care facilities, was not the most appropriate, at this time it was usually the accepted policy.

The Office maintains a database that logs all concerns and keeps track of all resolutions.

## Total Concerns Reviewed 2009-II

YEAR	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	Nov	Dec	
<b>2009</b>	46	57	58	54	59	67	62	56	63	60	55	53	690
<b>2010</b>	53	61	58	69	73	70	66	68	56	57	64	72	767
<b>2011</b>	68	53	56	61	62	80	75	61	73	68	67	72	796

