

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc.

Advocating on behalf of residents in long term care

Spring 2012



In my last letter I talked about the end of a 10 year era and the beginning of a new one with its own unique set of successes and challenges. I could not have imagined how quickly our newest challenge would emerge, and emerge it did with the recent vote to close Burlingame Long Term Care (BLTC).

BLTC is the 9th nursing home to close in San Mateo County. I believe this is a trend we are seeing across the nation, and that it is indicative of the changing face of long term care. The baby boomer generation is rejecting the concept of institutionalization and is seeking creative alternatives.

Given the surge of baby boomers that are now coming of age, there is no doubt that the demand for long-term care is not going to disappear. What about those who will need nursing care 24/7? There may still be a place for nursing homes, but our hope is that they will not be the large institutions that we have known. Rather we support Dr. Bill Thomas's vision of the nursing home of the future: The Green House Project (www.greenhouseproject.org) which is designed to put the "home" back in the nursing home. I urge you to go to the website to see what this concept offers in terms of resident-centered care (as opposed to the traditional medical model).

But in the meantime we must deal with the inevitability of finding placement for the 230 residents who still call Burlingame home. We are working side by side with the team that the county is putting into place to work on the transitioning process. I believe that our active involvement in this process is what distinguishes us from many of the local programs, always willing to go the second mile to support the residents we serve. It is thanks to all our valuable donors that make this possible..

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tippy Irwin".

Tippy Irwin
Executive Director



Over the last year we have continued to increase the depth and quality of the services we offer to the long-term care and elder community. While we maintain our focus on advocating for the nearly 10,000 frail and vulnerable long term care residents in our community we have also continued our efforts to educate the aging community and act as a resource for thousands of families who want the best for their loved one.

In keeping with our tradition of encouraging families and facilities to celebrate special occasions and holidays with residents we will be delivering small potted plants to residents the week of Mother's Day. If you would like to join me in brightening a resident's life and providing a plant for their room please be sure to check out the information in this newsletter.

Lastly, I wanted to take a moment to recognize all of you who have made the work of OSSMC possible. Through your volunteerism, financial support and enthusiasm for our mission you are helping to build a brighter elder care community in San Mateo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Johnson".

Judy Johnson
Board President

Ways to Support The Work of OSSMC

Celebrating Mother's Day with Residents

- Become an Ombudsman
- Donate today
- Become a monthly donor
- Remember us in your will and trusts
- Contact us to learn more

Join us for the second annual OSSMC Mother's Day Celebration and help bring joy to long term care residents throughout San Mateo County.

In partnership with facilities, families and local businesses OSSMC will be bringing Spring cheer indoors by delivering small orchids to residents in observance of Mother's Day.

Many of our residents do not have family or friends to celebrate the holidays with, and we are working to help provide them with a flower to celebrate Mother's Day.

If you would like to provide a Mother's Day flower for a resident visit please call 650.780.5707

Celebrating Community

Our volunteers, and the community organizations that support them, are truly the heart of OSSMC. We gather yearly to celebrate and honor their dedication and hard work to the aging community. Our deepest thanks and appreciation for all their hard work.



It All Begins with Education

Information is golden. The administrator and staff from Ageway Senior Care Home, a small 6-bed facility, attended our symposium on "Dementia Care Without Drugs: A Better Way for Long-term Care Facilities." So when a series of events began to unfold in their facility, they were fully equipped to deal with it. A resident who had only resided in the facility for a few months suffered a mild stroke and was taken to the hospital. Discharged after a day or so, she arrived back at the facility, in a state of inertia and extremely unstable on her feet. Within hours of her return she had already fallen and was badly bruised.

The daughter was very concerned that she had in effect "lost" her mother who appeared to be in a catatonic state. Mom was in no way the same woman she was before the stroke occurred. On advice of the facility the daughter called the ombudsman who immediately met with her and the staff at the facility. The administrator, noting that the hospitalist had prescribed 2 psychotropic drugs together with an anti-depressant expressed her concern.

She noted that mother had been doing so well before she was on the prescribed drugs and asked the daughter to have the primary physician do an evaluation of the medications. The daughter gladly did so. The primary care physician ordered that his patient be weaned off the antipsychotic drugs and the anti-depressant. The resident is making good progress, able to engage in a conversation and showing continued improvement as the drug doses diminish.

To learn more about reducing the use of psychotropic medications in your community visit:

www.ossmc.org

www.canhr.org

Alzheimer's Association Circle of Care Conference

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc. is thrilled to announce a partnership with Alzheimer's Association of Northern California and Northern Nevada to help produce The 2012 Circle of Care Conference. The Alzheimer's Association is renowned for its innovative approach and OSSMC is proud to partner with such a tremendous organization.

The Circle of Care Conference will be held in October 2012 at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Foster City, CA.

Details and ticket information coming soon.

Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month

May is Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month. Unfortunately each year we investigate approximately 200 incidents of abuse perpetrated against the residents in long term care in San Mateo County. The abuse falls into a variety of categories including verbal, physical, sexual, gross neglect, etc. In addition, with increasing consistency we are called to investigate incidences of financial abuse and exploitation.

Creating a safe community for all is our priority to learn more about how you can help prevent elder abuse visit our website at www.ossmc.org



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc.

Mission: Actively promote standards of excellence in advocacy and enhancement of the quality of life for residents of long-term care facilities in the county.

Contact Us

Website: ossmc.org
Mail: 711 Nevada St. Redwood City, CA 94061
Phone: 650.780.5707
Fax: 650.364.5399

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