



OMBUDSMAN

ADVOCATES FOR QUALITY OF LIFE IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

SAN MATEO COUNTY



2023

2024

IMPACT REPORT



Did you know?

In a recent study, it was determined that within a one year period, 36% of care staff had witnessed **Physical Abuse** and 81% of long-term care staff had witnessed **Psychological Abuse**. Approximately 7% of elder abuse cases are reported.



MISSION

The residents of long-term care are often the most vulnerable in society. OSSMC works to ensure the protection of these residents through advocacy, direct intervention, and dedication in collaboration with service providers.



VISION

Vision for the Program:

As a strong, financially sustainable program, OSSMC is the vanguard for advocacy across the state, spearheading new developments and ideas in advocacy for the residents we serve.

Vision for The Community We Serve:

In addition to providing resident-centered care, the LTC facilities will become an extension of the community, offering a variety of intergenerational projects as well as opportunities to participate at various levels in ongoing community events.



VALUES

Our three key values are to cherish our ombudsmen, to fully and faithfully support our clients, and to positively work with all community stakeholders.

Types of Facilities We Serve:

- Adult Day Health
- Adult Residential for the Disabled
- Skilled Nursing & Rehab
- Social Rehab
- Assisted Living
- Memory Care
- Board & Care
- Life Plan Communities



A note from
Elyse Brummer, Executive Director

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As the new Executive Director of Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County (OSSMC), I am proud to lead an organization uniquely dedicated to upholding the dignity and enhancing the quality of life for individuals residing in licensed residential care facilities within our community. Our mission is clear and critical: to advocate for the nearly 10,000 citizens across 420 licensed facilities in San Mateo County, ensuring they receive the care and respect they deserve.

We serve as a trusted resource for residents and family members to turn to for information and help resolve issues. Our trained volunteer ombudsmen regularly visit local facilities and speak directly with residents. We make sure that every person living in residential care in San Mateo County has someone on their side because we believe everyone deserves to be seen, heard, valued, and supported, so they can enjoy their best quality of life.

With nearly five decades of service, our depth of understanding and extensive experience position us as a leading authority in the field of residential care. We are committed to sharing our knowledge and insights to benefit all stakeholders in the care ecosystem.

Our work is grounded in a deep respect for the individual stories and personal circumstances of those we advocate for. We approach every situation with sensitivity, ensuring confidentiality and respect for privacy in all matters.

We invite you to join us in this crucial mission. Your support, whether through volunteering, advocacy, or donation, can significantly impact the lives of many. Together, we can ensure that every resident in San Mateo County's licensed care facilities feels valued, heard, and supported.

Warmest regards,

Elyse Gerson, MPA

Executive Director

Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County, Inc.

OSSMC Board Members

Board Chair

Mitchell Bailey

Board Vice Chair

Monika Lee, Esq.

Board Treasurer/Secretary

Bob Montevaldo

Board of Directors:

Eloisa Briones

David Cowell

Susan Houston

Grants Received

Atkinson Foundation

Deacon Charitable Foundation

City of Burlingame

Town of Colma

City of San Mateo

City of Menlo Park

City of South San Francisco

LB Charitable Foundation

Palo Alto Community Fund

Peninsula Health Care District

Safeway Foundation

San Bruno Community Foundation

Sequoia Health Care District

TouchPoint Foundation

Woodlawn Foundation

32
Volunteers!



4,500
Visits per year

420 
Facilities Served

 **1,200**
Complaints

Over 500
Elder abuse cases

24/7
Phone call response

13,571 
inbound calls

Honored Volunteers

Lisette Juarez

A 19- year-old student at Foothill College who has been successful in balancing her studies with helping Spanish speakers at Fair Oaks Community Center study and attain their U.S. citizenship. She has recently joined our team as an Ombudsman Friendly Visitor. Her mother is a professional caregiver so Lisette often accompanied her to residential care homes and visited with the residents. Her Ombudsman Services staff supervisor commented that she felt right at home on her first observation visit.



Jay Katz

Jay joined the Ombudsman Services in 2013 after retiring from a 40 year career as a social worker, working with the developmentally disabled and trauma brain injuries patients at Janet Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center in San Francisco. Our program has benefitted greatly from his professional experience. The El Granada resident has been a mentor and trainer for other field ombudsman and staff. Jay is currently a board member of the Golden Gate Recreation Center.





A message from
Mitchell Bailey, Board President

Dear OSSMC Volunteers, Funders, Supporters and Advocates:

On behalf of the Board of Directors for OSSMC, I am delighted to share the remarkable strides we have made together and to pave the way for the critical work that lies ahead for all of us. In our shared commitment to advocate for the dignity, rights, and well-being of those in residential care, we have forged a community united by compassion and driven by a shared purpose.

Over the past year, OSSMC has been steadfast in its mission to advocate for the thousands of seniors and adults with disabilities living in residential communities throughout San Mateo County. Our dedicated team of volunteer ombudsmen has been the heartbeat of our organization, offering their time, empathy and expertise to ensure every voice is heard and every concern addressed. Their unwavering commitment has not only safeguarded the rights of countless individuals but has also nurtured an environment where respect and quality care flourish.

As we look to the future, the need for advocacy, support, resources and compassion remain as pressing as ever. The challenges faced by residents of licensed care facilities and their families continue to evolve, and so too must our strategies and resources to meet these needs. Our commitment to being a trusted resource and a relentless and reliable advocate for the most vulnerable among us is unwavering, but we need your continued support to fulfill this mission. It is your compassion, commitment, and generosity that fuel our mission and enable us to make a lasting impact in the lives of so many.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Bailey

Chair

OSSMC Board of Directors



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Outreach Programs



ROBOTIC PETS

Emotional support and engagements for residents with dementia. Contact your local ombudsman if you know of a resident who would benefit.



MUSIC & MEMORY

Personalized Musical playlists for dementia residents. MP3 player provided.



CONTINUING EDUCATION

Linking staff to ongoing educational opportunities for personal and professional growth and learning.



TABLETS

Connecting families together to combat social isolation



MAKE A WISH

Supporting residents who lack resources for small items such as a new pair of slippers.



Betty Frayman-Kori, Program Manager

Betty has built a commendable career path marked by her diverse experiences and dedication to advocacy and operational management. Beginning as a volunteer ombudsman in 2016, she transitioned into a staff position by 2018, demonstrating her commitment and ability to serve effectively within the Daly City program. Her role as Program Manager underscores her leadership and expertise in addressing the needs of the community she serves.

Her extensive background in the medical industry, human resources, and operations across 15 years reflects a strong foundation in both the technical and administrative aspects of healthcare and organizational management. This blend of skills is essential for navigating the complexities of healthcare systems and advocating for patient rights and quality care, roles that she has evidently excelled in.

Betty's academic achievements, including a BS in Biochemistry from the University of Kent, an MS in Biology and Biotechnology from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and an MBA from Case Western Reserve University, provide her with a solid educational background that spans the scientific and managerial disciplines. This unique combination of scientific knowledge and business acumen is particularly valuable in her roles, allowing her to approach problems with a holistic and informed perspective.



Success Stories

Frank

Frank has resided in a skilled nursing facility (SNF) for the past three years, during which time he was unaware of his right to be discharged back home, as this was never communicated to him by the SNF's social worker. Our team successfully facilitated his discharge, ensuring he returned home with comprehensive support services arranged for his care.



Jan

This year, Jan relocated from the East Coast to a memory support facility in San Mateo County, closer to her family. Upon her arrival, she was accompanied by a nurse who supplied her diabetic medication. Unfortunately, the facility neglected to document and administer her medication for several days, resulting in Jan's hospitalization in intensive care. Our team intervened at the facility, holding the community accountable. This action unearthed additional instances of negligence, prompting fines and sanctions against the facility staff and leading to a change in leadership.



Fanny

At 102 years old, found herself without the financial means to continue residing in her Assisted Living community. In an attempt to circumvent the eviction process, the facility sought to transfer her to a hospital. Our team intervened to prevent this wrongful eviction, secured public resources for her support and negotiated with the facility on her behalf. Thanks to these efforts, Fanny was able to remain in her community and joyfully celebrate her 103rd birthday.





Top Complaints

Long-Term Care Ombudsman representatives assist residents in long-term care facilities with issues related to day-to-day care, health, safety, and personal preferences.

Problems can include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of residents' rights or dignity
- Physical, verbal, mental, or financial abuse
- Poor quality of care & negligence
- Dietary concerns
- Medical care, therapy, and rehabilitation issues
- Medicare and Medi-Cal benefit issues
- Improper transfer or discharge of a resident
- Inappropriate use of chemical or physical restraints

Community Services

Ombudsman regularly advocate for improvements in resident care and work to improve their quality of life. In addition, during conflicts the Ombudsman acts as a neutral third party representing the interests of the care facility resident.

Complaint Investigation and Resolution

Ombudsman investigates complaints made by or on behalf of care facility residents. Complaints can be made regarding any issue; most involve problems with care or abuse.

Eviction Assistance and Prevention

Ombudsman work with facility residents and their families to prevent evictions whenever appropriate. Many residents are unaware of eviction regulations and may become subject to improper evictions without Ombudsman intervention.

Training

Ombudsman provide training to facility staff, residents, and family regarding care issues, Residents' Rights, and elder abuse prevention.

Advanced Healthcare Directives - Witness

Ombudsman are required to witness these forms for residents in Skilled Nursing Facilities. We also provide forms and information to persons residing in Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly.

Community Education

We provide education at community events regarding long term care issues.

Placement Assistance

We provide lists of care facilities, checklists for helping to choose a facility, and assistance with reviewing licensing history. We also provide assistance with admission agreements.

Information and Referral

We provide information and referral to other agencies regarding long term care in the community.

Training Seminars

We provide information and trainings for employees of large or small companies regarding long term care issues. These trainings have been developed to help reduce absenteeism and caregiver stress for employees caring for their aging parents.



Advocate.

Educate.

Empower.



OMBUDSMAN

ADVOCATES FOR QUALITY OF LIFE IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

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