



ABOUT OMBUDSMAN SERVICES OF SAN MATEO COUNTY, INC.

Ombudsmen Services advocates for residents in the long term care facilities in our county. We monitor the long-term care facilities, holding administrators responsible for providing quality of care and quality of life for their residents. Our ombudsmen make over 4,500 unscheduled visits a year. They receive complaints made by or on behalf of the residents, investigate and bring resolution to those complaints. In addition to these federal mandates, the state has mandated that ombudsman must investigate allegations of abuse that emanate from the facilities. We do this in collaboration with local law enforcement and the licensing bodies.

Below is a case example demonstrating the impact of the work done by Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County:



A problematic nursing home was seeking a new buyer as it had run into financial difficulties. In the interim, with resident care seriously jeopardized, Ombudsman Services mobilized forces and had three pairs of ombudsmen visiting three times each day. What we found was a horror story: a feeding tube had fallen out of a resident and was lying on the floor, a resident suspended in a hoist lift and no staff present, residents that needed assistance with feeding not being fed, food portions cut by half the recommended size, therapeutic diets not being given, no bandages in the facility, shortage of oxygen supplies, residents locked out on the patio unable to get back into the facility, another resident stuck in the hallway in her wheelchair, facing the wall and unable to move. And the list goes on. We were in very close communication with the licensing body throughout the three month period, watching closely to ensure that the facility was held to legal standards of care for the residents, and watching over the transition when a new buyer was found, with assistance from the County Board of Supervisors.

CLIENTS SERVED

More than 70 percent of Americans over the age of 65 will need long-term care services at some point in their lives, according to a study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If that doesn't open eyes, consider the following HHS statistic: Anyone reaching the age of 65 years has a 40 percent chance of entering a nursing home, with a 20 percent chance of staying there for at least five years.

Our program currently serves 8,967 clients in 516 facilities.

We formally monitor and respond to allegations of abuse. We estimate that over 50% of our clients are at extremely low-income levels, with about 30% supported only through MediCal. The majority of residents are over age 60; approximately 70% suffer from some form of dementia; and 50% receive no visits from friends or family.