

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Volunteer Job Description

The Nursing Home Community Advisory Committees (NHCAC) and the Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committees (ACHCAC) serve the residents of long-term care facilities within each county. The committees hold legislative authority to monitor the Residents' Bill of Rights, promote community involvement and cooperation within the homes, provide public education pertaining to long-term care issues, and assist residents in grievance resolution. Community advisory committee members work to ensure quality care for persons residing in long-term care facilities.

NHCAC members are required to visit all nursing homes once a quarter as a committee and are to visit individually as often as possible. ACHCAC members are to visit Homes for the Aged quarterly, Family Care Homes annually, and Homes for Developmentally Disabled Adults annually as a committee with individual visits being carried out as often as possible. Facility visitation should occur on a regular but unannounced schedule. Business meetings will be held on a quarterly basis. Orientation and training will be provided by the North Carolina Division of Aging through the Regional LTC Ombudsman Program.

Members of community advisory committees must reside within the county in which the committee serves. Members should be willing and able to attend committee meetings, facility visitations and all levels of training. A community advisory committee member must possess skills in communication, problem solving, empathy and good judgment. Members should be able to effectively interact with residents and home administrators. All committee members are appointed by the County Commissioners in the county where they reside. One-third are to be nominated by facility administrators. All appointees shall serve an initial one-year term and may then be re-appointed to a subsequent term of two or three years to ensure staggered terms of office.

The legislation requires that "no person or immediate family member of a person with a financial interest in a home served by the committee or employee or governing board member of a home served by the committee, or immediate family member of resident in a home served by the committee may be a member of the committee." Immediate family has been interpreted to include a mother, father, sister, brother, child, grandmother and grandfather as well as in-laws.

A Community Advisory Committee represents the pivotal point within the Ombudsman Program. Without the presence of the community advisory committees, the Program would cease to exist in its present form. Volunteers serving as community advisory committee members are the link between the facilities and the community. The work of the committees will ultimately result in the improved quality of life for residents of long-term care facilities.

Specific duties include:

- ◆ completion of a 15-hour training course established by the State Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman within the North Carolina Division of Aging
- ◆ attending at least 10 hours of in-service training per year
- ◆ responding to referrals from the office of the Regional LTC Ombudsman
- ◆ receiving and investigating complaints from residents and family members and documenting complaint information
- ◆ negotiating resolution of complaints with facility administrators
- ◆ reporting any serious problems immediately to the office of the Regional LTC Ombudsman and/or appropriate governmental agency
- ◆ asking for technical assistance when unsure of how to proceed
- ◆ asking the office of the Regional LTC Ombudsman staff to make collateral contacts with other government agencies including licensing division
- ◆ preparing quarterly visit reports
- ◆ completing all required paperwork accurately and on time
- ◆ maintaining cooperative relationships with appropriate agencies, such as Adult Protective Service, Adult Home Specialists, Social Services Departments, Division of Facility Services Representatives and all law enforcement agencies
- ◆ establishing rapport with residents, families, staff and home administrators
- ◆ assisting residents and families with information and support in finding appropriate placements
- ◆ mobilizing volunteers for facilities (i.e. promoting community involvement in facilities)
- ◆ promoting communication, education and awareness of issues affecting institutionalized older adults

For additional information, please contact the Regional LTC Ombudsman:

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