



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Volunteer Advocates Needed

Melissa Dever, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7

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Are you an individual that often thinks or states, “I feel sad for people who reside in nursing facilities and seldom have visitors?” Maybe you have thought, “Who checks on those who have no family members involved and ensures their voices are being heard?” Maybe you have retired recently and feel you need some type of meaningful connection. Conversely, you could be starting out in your career and want more experience with advocacy and working with older adults. If these statements describe you, I would love to introduce you to our Volunteer Ombudsman Program at the Area Agency on Aging District 7.



The Ombudsman provides a voice for consumers of long-term care. These consumers include residents of nursing homes, residential care facilities and adult care homes, as well as recipients of “in-home” services. The primary role of the Ombudsman Program is to investigate and resolve complaints concerning long-term care facilities and home and community-based care providers in an effort to improve the quality of life and care for long-term care consumers. Complaints encompass concerns about the violation of client rights, nursing care issues, financial problems, food, environmental issues, and other matters of concern to consumers, family caregivers and loved ones.

The Ombudsman Program recruits and trains volunteers who visit assigned nursing homes on their own schedule, at least twice a month (weekly is preferred). Volunteers provide a voice for nursing home residents and serve to lessen the isolation and loneliness experienced by many residents who have no one to speak on their behalf. Volunteers also help to educate residents about their rights, thus empowering them to become more vocal in resolving their own complaints and concerns. Volunteer Ombudsmen plan their own schedules, are permitted to visit any day of the week, and are provided hands-on training and technical assistance by the Ombudsman Staff. Our Agency covers ten counties in southern Ohio including: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

To learn more, please visit our website at www.aaa7.org, call us at 1-800-582-7277, or e-mail to info@aaa7.org. We’re here to answer any questions you may have about this volunteer opportunity that truly makes a difference for so many.

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