

# Introduction to the National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

On ACL's AGing Independence and Disability  
(AGID) Program Data Portal

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# Agenda

1. Ombudsman Program Overview
2. Chat Engagement – Share your involvement with the Ombudsman program
3. Data available through NORS
4. How AoA/ACL uses NORS data
5. Using AGID to access NORS data
  - Live demonstration

# Poll

## Which of the following best describes your role?

- I am a State Ombudsman
- I work in a State LTC Ombudsman Program
- I work in a Local LTC Ombudsman Program
- I am an academic or researcher
- I work in a State Unit on Aging or other state-level agency
- I work in a AAA or other local-level organization
- I work for the Administration for Community Living
- I work in another Federal agency
- I work for an advocacy or non-profit organization
- I am a congressional staffer
- I am a member of the media
- Other

# Administration for Community Living

A Division of U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

\*Brings together the Administration on Aging (AoA), the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD), and the HHS Office on Disability to serve as the Federal agency responsible for increasing access to community supports, while focusing attention and resources on the unique needs of older Americans and people with disabilities across the lifespan.

## Mission

Maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities across the lifespan, and their families and caregivers.

## Vision

All people, regardless of age and disability, live with dignity, make their own choices, and participate fully in society.



# Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) Overview

- LTC Ombudsman programs work to resolve problems related to the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals who live in LTC facilities, such as nursing homes, board and care and assisted living facilities, and other residential care communities
- The Swedish word “ombudsman” means “a public official appointed to investigate citizens’ complaints against local or national government agencies that may be infringing on the rights of individuals”
- Begun in 1972 as a demonstration program, today the Ombudsman program operates in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam, under the authorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA)

# Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) Overview, page 2

- Each state has an Office of the State LTC Ombudsman, headed by a full-time State LTC Ombudsman who directs the program statewide.
- State Ombudsmen designate staff and thousands of volunteers as representatives of the Office to directly serve residents.
- These representatives regularly visit long-term care facilities, monitor conditions and care, support residents to self-advocate and provide a voice for those unable to speak for themselves.

# Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) Overview, page 3

- The OAA requires Ombudsman programs to:
  - Identify, investigate, and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of LTC facility residents
  - Provide information to residents about LTSS
  - Ensure that residents have regular and timely access to ombudsman services
  - Represent the interests of residents before governmental agencies and seek administrative, legal, and other remedies to protect residents
  - Analyze, comment on, and recommend changes in laws and regulations pertaining to the health, safety, welfare, and rights of residents

# Complaint Example – Mary

- Mary has lived in a nursing home for over a year to receive support for her symptoms from Alzheimer’s disease. However, the facility was not providing the individualized care she needed. As her “behaviors” became difficult to manage, the nursing home issued a 30 day discharge notice.
- The Ombudsman program intervened and worked with the family and staff on a care plan.
  - Ensured the needed staffing changes and shower safety, lowered the dosage of medications which caused sleepiness, and provided assistance at meal times.
  - The program’s advocacy helped Mary to stay in her nursing home and made a positive impact for all residents living in the facility.

# Strengths of the LTC Ombudsman Model

- Person-centered: focus is on resident's goal and perspective
- Flexibility in working towards resolution
- Resolution at lowest level, often without additional intervention:
  - Can result in quicker outcome for the resident
  - Can avoid need for regulatory or legal involvement
  - Can save public resources
- Engagement of community: use of volunteers and local Ombudsman entities
  - Use of volunteers and/or local Ombudsman entities varies by state
- Residents' individual complaints and interests are translated into systems advocacy and policy-level solutions

# National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

- State Ombudsman programs use information systems to document cases and complaints received and investigated and to track other program activities such as visits to facilities, instances of information and assistance, participation in resident and family councils, etc.
- Each state reports this data, known as the National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS) to the Administration for Community Living (ACL). It is this NORS data that is available on ACL's AGID website.
- The data has been collected since 1996.

# Data available through NORS

- Total counts of:
  - Cases opened and closed
  - Total number of complainants
  - Bed counts (nursing facilities and board & care)
  - Facility counts (nursing facilities and board & care)
  - Facilities visited at least quarterly (all LTC, nursing facilities, and board & care)
- Complaint details:
  - Person lodging the complaint (e.g., resident, relative/friend, ombudsman, facility staff)
  - Settings on complaint (e.g., nursing facility, board & care)
- Disposition and Verifications (e.g., resolutions, regulatory change/legislative action, unsatisfactory resolution, withdrawals, referrals)

# Data available through NORs, page 2

- Program Funding by Source
- Local/Regional Ombudsman Entities (e.g., designated local ombudsman entities, Area Agencies on Aging, Legal Services Providers)
- Other Ombudsman Activities (e.g., training sessions, consultations to facilities and individuals, facilities visited, resident and family council meetings attended, community education sessions, media interviews)
- State and Local Staff and Volunteers
  - Program staff
  - Clerical staff
  - Certified Volunteer Ombudsman
  - Other volunteers
  - Volunteer hours donated
- Constructed measures, such as complaints per LTC bed, nursing facility bed per paid program staff, etc.

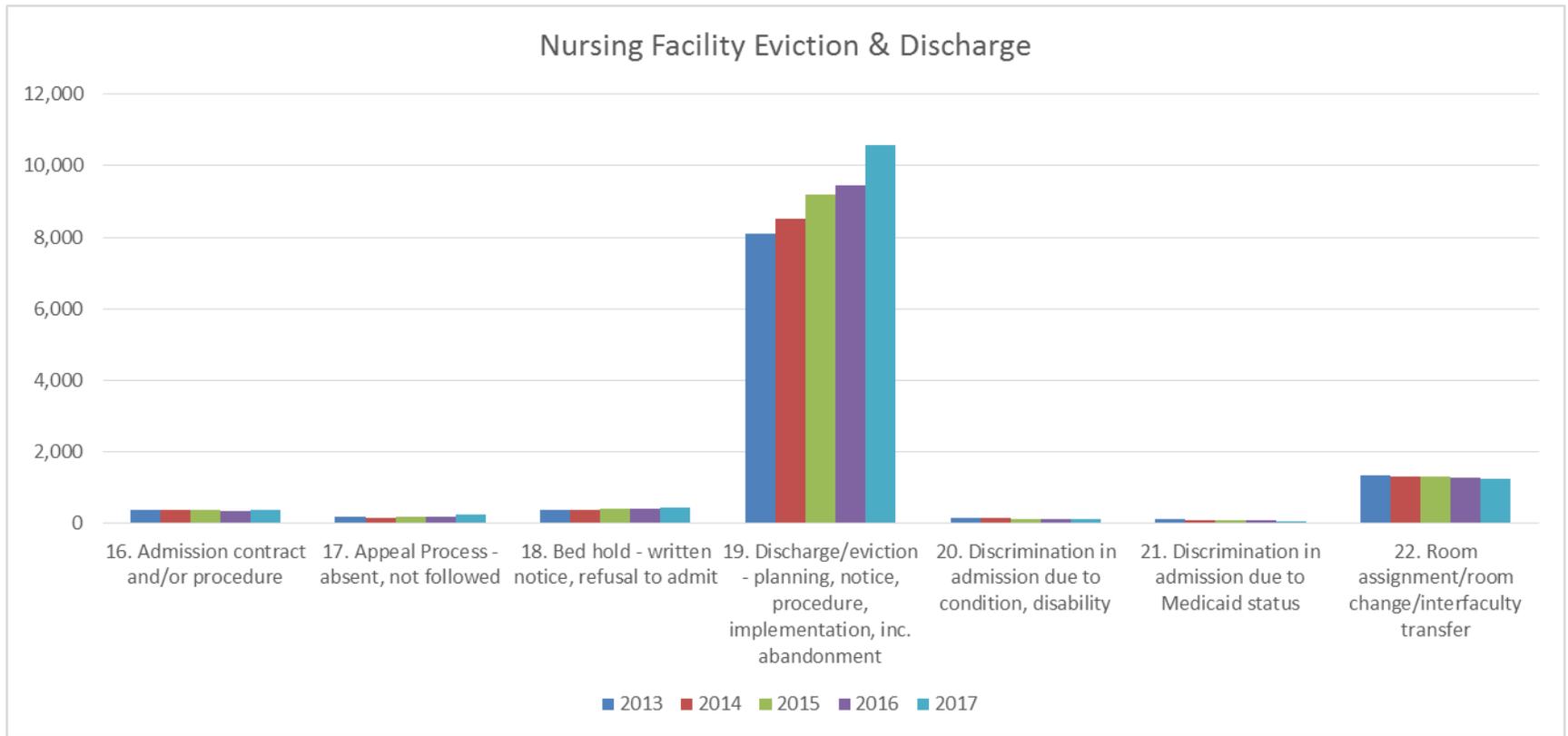
# Data available through NORs, page 3

- Complaints by type and sub-type
  - Residents Rights
    - Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation
    - Access to Information
    - Admission, Transfer, Discharge, Eviction
    - Autonomy, Choice, Preference, Exercise of Rights, Privacy
    - Financial, Property (Except for Financial Exploitation)
  - Resident Care
    - Care
    - Rehabilitation or Maintenance of Function
    - Restraints – Chemical and Physical
  - Quality of Life
    - Activities and Social Services
    - Dietary
    - Environment
  - Administration
    - Policies, Procedures, Attitudes, Resources
    - Staffing
  - Not Against Facility
    - Certification/Licensing Agency
    - State Medicaid Agency
    - System/Others
  - Other
    - Complaints in Other Than Nursing or Board & Care/Similar Settings

# How AoA/ACL uses NORS Data

- Budget justification
- To inform policy
  - Long-Term Care Ombudsman complaints used to revised nursing home regulations
    - “Failure to respond to requests for assistance” = Second most frequent nursing facility complaint category nationally in FY 2013 (7,220 complaints) and in top one or two place for past decade.

# How AoA/ACL uses NORS Data, page 2



# Using AGID to access NORS data

- What is AGID?
  - AGID is an online query system that provides access to ACL-related program performance results, surveys and other data files
  - AGID allows users to produce and export their own tables, maps, and other summary information on ACL supportive services and systems of care for older adults, caregivers, and people with disabilities of all ages
- AGID data comes from:
  - State Program Reports (SPR)
  - Title VI Services by Tribal Organization
  - National Survey of Older Americans Act (OAA) Participants
  - Census Data and Special Tabulations
  - National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)

# Using AGID to access NORS data, page 2

- Access NORS data through these AGID functions:
  - Data-at-a-Glance
    - Generate quick estimates in table format
    - Create maps, line graphs, and bar charts
    - Allows you to examine a single data element by state and year to explore the data for patterns, anomalies, or areas of interest
  - Custom Tables
    - Provides detailed, multi-year tables
    - Uses a step-by-step process to select multiple data elements to compare and download in a spreadsheet format
    - Designed to present data elements applicable to your needs and to further refine your results based on demographic stratifiers or geographic locations
  - Resources – Data Outputs
    - Products, such as factsheets, data stories, briefs, and blogs, that are generated from AGID Data

# Examples of NORS data on AGID (FY 2017)

- Completed work on more than **201,000** complaints
- Provided > **402,000** consultations to residents, families and others
- Provided > **127,000** consultations to facility staff
- Provided technical assistance, training, and information to:
  - Resident councils (> **21,000** sessions)
  - Family councils (~**1800** sessions)
- Trained LTC facility staff (> **4400** sessions)
- Participated in facility surveys (> **17,703**)

\*Fully or partially resolved

Source: 2017 , ACL National Ombudsman Reporting System (NORS)



# New Products

- Data Stories - <https://agid.acl.gov/Resources/>
- Factsheet
- And more... *2018 data coming to AGID soon*
- Information on updates to the new NORS data collection requirements

# LTCOP Funding Sources

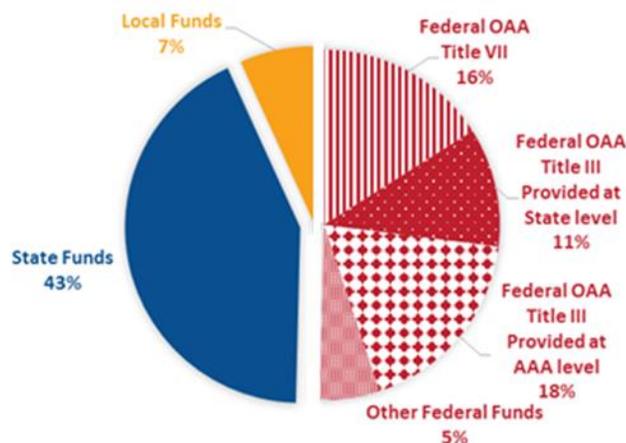


## Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Sources of Funds

### Quick Facts

- FY 2017 NORS data indicate that the federal government is the primary entity funding the Ombudsman Program, providing 50% of total funding in FY 2017.
- The Older Americans Act (OAA) sources comprise 45% of total funding.
- Ombudsman programs effectively leverage federal dollars to provide comprehensive services.
- State sources of funds include state government appropriations, private grants and other state level sources.
- Local agency contributions offer another source of program funds to serve individuals in their localities.

The Ombudsman Program operates in all states, DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Funding for the Ombudsman program comes from a variety of sources. Title VII, Chapter II of the OAA is the specific source for Ombudsman programs.



To access more data from the National Ombudsman Reporting Systems (NORS) visit <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NORS/Year/>. For more information on NORS visit

<https://acl.gov/programs/protecting-rights-and-preventing-abuse/long-term-care-ombudsman-program>.

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# LTCOP Complaints by Type

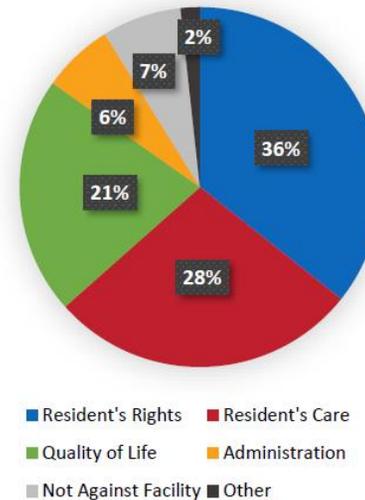


## Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Complaints

### 2017 Quick Facts

- Of the 201,460 closed complaints, the five most frequent complaint subtypes in all Long-Term Care (LTC) facilities include:
  1. Care
  2. Autonomy, choice, preference, exercise of rights and privacy
  3. Environment
  4. Admission, transfer, discharge and eviction
  5. Abuse, gross neglect and exploitation
- Improper eviction or inadequate discharge/planning was the most frequent individual complaint in all LTC facilities

### Major Complaints by Type, 2017



The Older Americans Act requires Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs to identify, investigate, and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of residents who live in LTC facilities in all 50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, and Guam. **To access more data** from the National Ombudsman Reporting Systems (NORS) visit <https://agid.acl.gov/CustomTables/NORS/Year/>. **For more information** on NORS visit <https://acl.gov/programs/protecting-rights-and-preventing-abuse/long-term-care-ombudsman-program>.  
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# Live Demonstrations of NORS Data on AGID

# Q&A

Thank You!