



# VOICES Viewpoint



UPHOLDING THE RIGHTS & DIGNITY OF  
NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

## What is VOICES?

VOICES, Inc. is a non-profit organization. We provide Long-Term Care Ombudsman services to you whether you live in a nursing home or licensed assisted living home in Vanderburgh County. We investigate your complaints, help resolve your problems, and protect your rights. We can help with quality of life issues, selecting the right facility, sources of payment, advanced directives and resident rights. We are here to help you!

Call Michelle Motta or Alicia Reeves at  
1-812-423-2927 for free, confidential assistance

## Your home must allow in-person visitation for you

Federal regulation, 42 CFR § 483.10(f)(4), states “The resident has a right to receive visitors of his or her choosing at the time of his or her choosing, subject to the resident's right to deny visitation when applicable, and in a manner that does not impose on the rights of another resident.”

Visitors who are not up to date on their vaccinations, should wear masks and physically distance when around other residents, visitors and staff. **Visitation is allowed at all times for all residents**, this includes indoor visitation. And facilities can no longer limit frequency and length of visits, number of visitors, or require advanced scheduling of visits. around other residents, visitors and staff.

Mask requirements depend on various factors including the local level of transmission. The safest practice is for visitors to wear masks and physically distance, especially if either the visitor or resident are not up to date with all recommended COVID-19 vaccine doses.

If the nursing home's county COVID-19 community level of transmission is substantial to high, all residents and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, should wear masks and physically distance, at all times.

Residents, regardless of vaccination status, can choose not to wear a mask when other residents are not present and to have close contact (including touch) with their visitor.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline has been designated as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.



Individuals in emotional crisis or considering suicide can call, text, or chat 988. They will be connected to trained counselors.

In addition, if you are having thoughts of suicide, you should share your feelings IMMEDIATELY with the social worker or a nurse where you live. Ask for help so you can get help. Be your own best advocate. Besides, it is brave to reach out for help, when needed.

**If you are not being allowed to use an assistive device, such as a Google Nest or Alexa Dot, please contact us for assistance!**  
**1-812-423-2927**

## **Is Your Transportation to Medical Appointments Late, Cancelled or a No-Show?**

VOICES has been hearing some serious widespread concerns with Southeastrans. Southeastrans provides non-urgent transportation for Medicare/Medicaid members.

We are learning that scheduled transportation, with Southeastrans, is regularly late, cancels the transport request, or does not show up at all. When residents are unable to make it to appointments, they may have to wait weeks or months to get the appointment rescheduled. In addition, when too many appointments have been missed, medical providers have refused to schedule any more appointments.

**If you have problems with Southeastrans appointments, call:**

**Southeastrans Provider Relations**  
**1-888-833-4154**

or

**Gary Jones**  
**1-317-233-2834**

## **Be long-term care aware!**

Join our Facebook page! You will find information to help you be aware of the latest long-term care news and how to be your own best advocate. Information IS power!

Stay informed at **[facebook.com/voicesinc](https://facebook.com/voicesinc)**



The National  
**CONSUMER VOICE**  
for Quality Long-Term Care  
formerly NCCNHR

## FACT SHEET

### ADVOCACY SUGGESTIONS FOR NURSING HOME RESIDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

**Be familiar** with staff members - their names, roles, and responsibilities in resident care. Know who is in charge of various areas of care and how grievances are addressed. Read the resident admission agreement carefully making note of what services are provided and under what circumstances the facility might discharge the resident. Ask to see a copy of the facility's survey report to learn about past problems in the facility.

**Educate** the facility staff about your own or your loved one's preferences, daily routine, activities, work, etc. when living independently and work with them to formulate an individualized care plan which will take these factors into account. The care plans should encourage and enable the resident to attain or maintain their highest practicable level of physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being.

**Pay attention** to the care provided and how it impacts your or your loved one's condition: hygiene, mood, energy level, weight, etc. Note changes and try to determine if they are due to any deficiencies in the care provided. Monitor whether staff are responsive to resident requests for assistance and are kind, patient, and respectful in their provision of care.

**Report concerns** and problems to staff members as soon as they arise so that they can be addressed immediately. First voice concerns to those directly involved. If this action yields no result, report your concern to staff supervisors.

**Document** your concerns and actions taken to report them: the names of those involved, date, time, and details of the event, who the concern has been reported to and when, what steps are taken to remedy the problem, and the outcome.

**Request a meeting** with appropriate staff people to address concerns you may have. Focus the meeting on the outcome that you would like to see and how it can be accomplished. The meeting should result in a concrete plan that addresses the problem and identifies who is responsible for implementing it.

**Be assertive**, persistent, and confident, but respectful in your interactions with staff. Clearly state your specific concern and the outcome you would like to see. Remember that, as consumers, you or your loved one should expect high quality services, and acting respectfully will avoid creating ill will.

**Organize a resident or family council** with other concerned residents or family members. Resident and family councils can be effective and powerful tools for maintaining a consumer voice in the facility and for addressing facility-wide concerns with administrators.

**Seek outside help** if your concerns are not remedied by the facility or if you witness an instance of severe neglect or abuse. Report complaints and care problems to the State or Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program or the state survey agency, so that they can investigate.

For more information and resources on advocacy suggestions for nursing home residents and their families, visit [www.theconsumervoice.org](http://www.theconsumervoice.org)

*National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1975 by Elma E. Holder to protect the rights, safety and dignity of American's long-term care residents.*

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# Home

Here I am alone in my little bed, in my new little room at 11:30 PM. A private room, but a bit small for most. For me, a new wonderland full of reminders of things both past and present. These are MY THINGS, in MY HOME! I can do with them whatever I want. Some large and some teeny tiny items, which I could keep and cherish; but you see, they are MINE. No one can take them unless I say so and yes, at times, I do.

That said, lie back, imagine you too are in your space, no one there except you and your most precious gifts given with love by friends and family.

You live in a long-term care facility as I do. Tonight, you are tired from the journey here and your activities of the day – a good feeling which, in truth, left you a bit achy. You lay back in your bed and survey the surroundings. I hear my bird chirping. Staff are talking at the nurses' station, a call bell goes off in the hall, TVs with different channels are melding together. Probably not what you would expect to be in your home.

You see, time marches on and life goes on its merry way seeking that which it can find. Things have changed for us needing special care. . . the needs that, for whatever reason, can only be met in "the home." Oh, how bad that sounds on the surface . . . but wait!

Now close your eyes and access your good memories. What do you see? Time spent with family and friends? That special toy you received for Christmas? Reaching a goal you had set for yourself and taking pride in your accomplishment? Welcoming new members of your family? Laying in the grass and watching the clouds float by? For me, I remember a cross made with loving hands by a friend and also how my childhood home looked with photos of family adorning the walls.

These are great memories and feelings of life that WAS. Yes, what WAS is gone...but gone forever?! No, my friend!!! These are memories and feelings that no one can take away. What is left, you think as you relax deeper into the recesses of your mind. What have you found as you make room for your happy memories? If you allow yourself, you will find as I did-- a special place for only you. "What is this place?" you ask. I reply, "This is home." This is Home THIS IS MY HOME!

HOME. What a grand, peaceful and joyous place. Have a great summer.

Until next time, I am Judith Mangum . . . Resident

## VOICES is Only Able to Provide Essential Advocacy Services to Those in Long-Term Care Homes Because of:

**Donations from generous people!** Partial funding for the Ombudsman Program is provided by a Community Development Block Grant administered through the City of Evansville, Department of Metropolitan Development.

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