



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 also provide information and training to residents, their families, staff and the general public. We are here to help you!

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

Frequently Asked Question

Question: Are visiting hours enforceable?

Answer: It is your home, so you have the right to have visitors of your choosing at any time of your choosing. However . . . your visitors cannot infringe on the rights of others who live in your home. For example, if you have a visitor late at night, they need to be quiet as to not wake up your neighbors.

Be Informed

Look for our weekly column in the *Evansville Courier & Press*. It runs in the Thursday edition of the paper. Articles cover more in-depth topics relevant to those living in long-term care homes. Articles can also be found on the Courier & Press website or at VOICES' Facebook page at www.facebook.com/voicesinc/. If you have a "Dear Ombudsman" question for us to answer in the column, please send them to the address below. You will remain anonymous.

**Taken from The
Resident Advocate:**

Vol 2 | Issue 1 January 2018



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

Theft and Loss: What Can I Do About It?

Theft or loss of belongings, money, or other property is a significant concern for many residents. Federal law says that residents have the right to use personal belongings, and that they have the right to be free from exploitation or misappropriation of property.

Misappropriation of resident property means deliberately using the resident's property without permission. Exploitation means taking advantage of a resident for personal gain through use of threats, intimidation, or coercion. Some examples of misappropriation include:

- Theft of money or belongings
- Identity theft
- Unauthorized or coerced purchases on a resident's credit or debit card, or
- A resident who gives money to staff to provide ongoing care, or after the staff member made the resident believe that they were in financial crisis

Long-term care facilities must take reasonable steps to ensure that resident property is kept safe from theft and loss. They must have policies and procedures for preventing and responding to theft, misappropriation, and exploitation. The facility cannot ask or require residents to waive potential facility liability for losses of personal property.

Take steps to prevent your belongings from getting lost or stolen by:

- Marking all personal items and take pictures of valuables,
- Keeping a copy of the inventory list created by staff and update it as needed,
- Asking the facility about their policies for protecting personal belongings,
- Ask the facility for a secure place to lock up valuables.

If you are the victim of theft or loss, what can you do?

- Report the loss immediately to appropriate staff at the facility
- Notify local law enforcement
- Contact your local long-term care ombudsman

DID YOU KNOW



- A care plan is a strategy and plan for how staff will help a resident.
- Care plans are to be based on resident needs and goals.
- Care plan meetings should occur every three months, or sooner if needed.
- You have the right to be involved in your care plan meeting.



How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it!

-George Elliston, American writer

Springtime and Life

As Spring approaches, we are remembering the days when we opened our window to feel the sweet breezes flowing throughout the house. Breezes blew, things grew and soon the fragrances of "Springtime" were abundant. What a glorious and wondrous time of year...a time of birth for all of nature, both plant and animal.

There is nothing sweeter than holding a newborn kitten or puppy as you feel their fuzzy fur, gently giving a hug and a kiss, then returning them to mom for her care. There are new bird nests with tiny eggs that will soon burst open. We hear the cheep, cheep, cheep of the babies as mom and dad bring nourishment so they will grow and fly on their own.

Let us not forget fields and yards full of yellow daffodils which heralded in Spring. Of course we picked as many as our little hands could hold to give to mom. She then rewarded us with a hug, a kiss and a smile so broad her eyes sparkled.

We used to play games such as "Mother May I", "Red Rover", "Red Light, Green Light" and hopscotch on the sidewalks. A resident told me she used to take long rides on her horse in the country. That sounds like such fun!

I remember "Spring Formals" when girls wore lovely dresses and wrist corsages of Spring flowers. The boys looked so handsome in rented patent leather shoes and tuxedos with a ruffled shirt or a cummerbund.

Time to bring out the mowers to cut grass which is so green and tall. It grows so fast that it will happen again in a week. Boys go door to door and ask, "Want your grass cut? I'm cheap and do a good job!"

Barefoot again, picnics in the park, bonfires to roast wieners and make s'mores. Good memories for sure. "Anyone ready to play tag?"

It is time to plant a garden of corn, tomatoes, green beans and peas. The bounty they bring will be canned or frozen so we can enjoy their deliciousness during the long winter.

A nurse told me, "This is a season of happiness as people come out of depression they seemingly had during those cold, barren days of winter; and now Spring is a time of spirited growth and renewing of one's life."

With all the new animals, beautiful flowers and flowing breezes we know Spring is truly here.

Enjoy Spring with all it brings. The childhood memories and the new ones unfolding as another year of growth and new life begins. Enjoy flowers blooming, trees budding and gardens growing wherever you look.

Happy Spring to all!

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



Resident Rights Corner—Privacy

Because you are making a long-term care setting your home (temporarily or long term) you have certain rights. Most importantly, it is your right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect.

Respecting your privacy is an important factor in dignity and respect. To determine if your privacy is being protected, ask yourself the following:

- Does staff respect my privacy by knocking before entering your room?
- Do they wait for an answer?
- Do I receive care (baths, personal care, physical examinations and treatments) in private?
- Are doors shut, privacy curtains pulled and window drapes/blinds closed when staff are providing care to me?
- Am I properly covered when being transferred to and from the shower?
- Does the staff keep my medical condition and medical records private from other residents and visitors?
- Do staff rummage through my closet or drawers without my permission?
- Do I receive my mail unopened?
- Is there a place for me to make or receive telephone calls in private? (The nurses' station is not considered a private location.)
- Is there a place for me to meet with visitors in private?
- Is my resident council allowed to meet in private if it wishes?

These rights are protected under state and federal law! If you need assistance in protecting your rights, you may contact your Ombudsman.



Funding for VOICES is provided by:

Donations from generous supporters!

CDBG Funds administered through the City of
Evansville Department of Metropolitan
Development

The Thomas A. & Sharon K. Ruder Foundation,
a partner with VOICES, Inc.



Upcoming Events:

October 26

Dance the Night Away-Twist or Treat
(VOICES family fun-fundraising event!)
Go to www.voicesinc.info or call 812-423-2927

October 1-31

Residents' Rights Month

December

Distributing Cards for Holiday Cheer~
Generation to Generation Card Drive