



NJ Long-Term Care Ombudsman

If you have concerns about abuse, neglect, exploitation, crime or serious injury to your loved one who is living in a Long-Term Care Facility, the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman is available to help. They can answer questions, investigate, resolve and refer complaints to the appropriate agency.

Calls are anonymous and free. They can be reached at **877-582-6995** or via email at **ombudsman@ltco.nj.gov**.



800.424.2494

ubhc.rutgers.edu/services/geriatric
www.Care2Caregivers.com

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WE CARE

We hope these tips are useful as you care for your loved one in a Long-Term Care Facility. Please know that the staff at Care2Caregivers is available to discuss these issues and help you get connected with programs that support your health and well-being. Our dedicated, professional staff members have also been family caregivers, and they are here to listen.



WHEN YOU CARE • WE ARE THERE

For more information:

Comprehensive Services on Aging (COPSA) has been providing compassionate and sensitive mental health care to the elderly since 1975. A team of Geriatric Psychiatrists, Social Workers and Case Managers are available to assist families with diagnosis and treatment. COPSA also provides training for professionals, family caregivers and the community on issues related to aging, memory and mental health. Care2Caregivers provides resources, referrals, information and supportive counseling to anyone caring for someone with memory loss. Call for help.

HELPLINE: 800.424.2494

RUTGERS HEALTH

University Behavioral Health Care
COPSA Institute for Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders

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AFTER YOUR LOVED ONE MOVES TO A **LONG-TERM CARE FACILITY...**

What Now?





There may be times when it is necessary for a family member to be placed in facility such as a Rehabilitation, Assisted Living or Nursing Home. Even though you may no longer be the one doing the “hands on” caregiving each day, you are still the caregiver, though now in the important role of “Advocate”.

It is now your responsibility to oversee your loved one’s care and speak for them when they can no longer speak for themselves.

The Transition

Remember that, as your loved one is getting used to their new environment, you are also adjusting to a new life. Most caregivers report having very mixed feelings. Although you may be relieved of the day- to-day stresses of home caregiving, you may feel guilty about not being able to keep them at home. For some caregivers, this may be the first time that they are living alone. Many caregivers report feelings of loneliness. These feelings may be more intense during the first few months. Some facilities may have suggestions about how often you should visit during the early weeks, as your visits may help or hinder your loved one’s ability to connect with their new home. Support groups can be wonderful places where it is safe to share these feelings.

Partnering with Staff

Be sure to tell the staff important facts about your loved one, such as what they did for work, places they have lived, what kind of music they like. This information may help staff connect and build a relationship with your loved one. Bring pictures from home. Don’t be afraid to speak up if you feel your loved one is not getting the appropriate care. Talk directly with staff including the nurses and managers as needed.

Tips for Visits:

- Bring something interesting to do, even if it is just reading the paper aloud or looking at pictures in a book.
- Go to scheduled activities together.
- Bring in favorite foods from home.
- Encourage family and friends to visit.
- Some families find it helpful to keep a notebook in the room to jot down messages to each other about how their loved one is doing or important conversations that may have transpired with staff.
- Attend the parties.

Making Departures Easier

Departure time can be difficult; especially if your loved one is asking to go home with you. Try timing your departure when an activity is going on at the center so the focus is on them doing something, instead of on you leaving. Some caregivers even say something along the lines of, “I am going to the store and will be back soon.”

How Frequently Should I Visit?

Know that there are no rules about how often you should visit or how long you should stay. This will depend on your own health, how far you have to travel, your work schedule and the condition of your loved one. You do not have to be there every day. Be there when you can and be present when you are there.

Take Care of Yourself

This is your chance to focus on yourself. Schedule those medical appointments for yourself that you have been neglecting. Start an exercise program, even if it is just walking at the mall. Reconnect with friends, your bowling team, or your house of worship. Go visit your family members who live out town. Take the trip you always wanted to take. Ask a friend or family member to go with you. Volunteer with an organization you care about. Enjoy hobbies that you may have put on hold over the past few years because of the demands of caregiving. Take a class at your local library or a bus trip with your senior center.

