

# OFFICE OF THE STATE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

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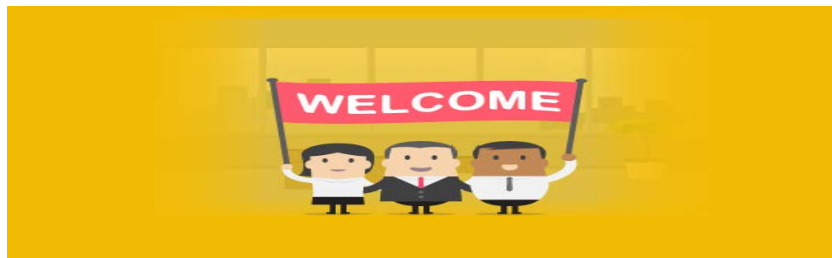
## AN UPDATE ON WEST REGION OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM MELANIE MCNEIL, ESQ., STATE OMBUDSMAN

Communities Aligned for Deeply Rooted Elderhood (CADRE, Inc) is the new contractor covering the West region for Ombudsman Representative services. The counties covered are the same counties that were in the West area during the 2017 state fiscal year, including Butts, Carroll, Clayton, Coweta, DeKalb, Fayette, Harris, Heard, Henry, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Newton, Rockdale, Spalding, Talbot, Troup and Upson. Andrew Hales, Roberta Collins, Linda Bledsoe, Rebecca Folkes and Inger Jones are the Ombudsman Representatives serving the residents of the area. The main phone number is 678-378-2934. Please look for an updated list of contacts via e-mail and on our website. Welcome CADRE as our new agency to provide advocacy services to long-term care residents!

### Connecting with the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System

It is exciting that the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System is partnering with the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman to help support Ombudsman Representative work; for example, access free downloadable resources about elder care, dementia, senior abuse and free online continuing education classes such as Certificate in Healthy Aging and Helping Elderly Parents. The library system also provides free meeting room space. Moreover, the Georgia Libraries for Accessible Statewide Services (GLASS) provide free accessible reading material to people who, due to a disability, are unable to read standard print. They provide free talking book players, and books come postage paid through the mail. Their patrons have visual impairments or blindness, physical impairments so they cannot handle a book or turn pages, or they have reading disabilities such as dyslexia. GLASS has both fiction and nonfiction books for all ages. Many are also available in braille or large print. Our long-term care ombudsman representatives are now able to share information with facilities and residents.





We are so excited that Jeff Taylor has come to work with the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Jeff has 16 years of experience as an Ombudsman Representative and Coordinator. Jeff is extremely knowledgeable about the Ombudsman Program, especially with OmbudsManager and assisting residents of long-term care facilities. Jeff is on staff to provide technical assistance with questions about data as well as with the substance of the work.

“I’m back. Just please be patient with me while I get settled in and, I’ll plan on helping y’all all I can,” Jeff Taylor

### **Associate Certified Volunteer Training Call with Melanie McNeil, Esq., State Ombudsman**

The Capitol Ombudsman Program conducts a training call every Saturday with all certified volunteers. Topics vary from arbitration agreement issues, grievances, admissions, transfers, and discharges. Greg Jolly, Coordinator at the Capitol Ombudsman Program, invited Melanie to have a conversation with certified volunteers on July 15, 2017 at 10:00 am. Melanie discussed many nursing home issues including communication, oral care, and advocacy work.

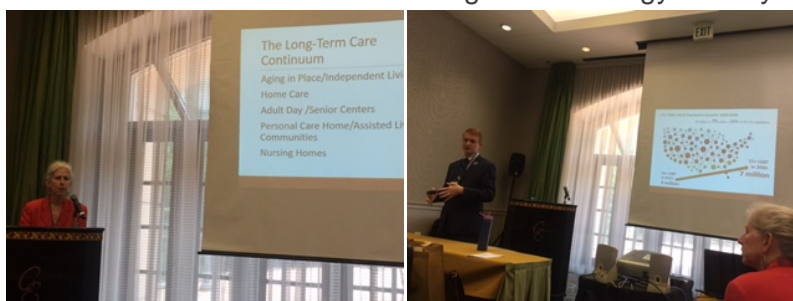
### **Upcoming Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program WebEx – Advocating for LGBT Adults Receiving Long-Term Services and Supports**

Please join us for our upcoming WebEx on August 21, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.!

Topic: The Invisible Population: Advocating for LGBT Adults Receiving Long-Term Services and Supports

Description: While receiving long-term services and supports can be stressful for anyone dealing with the loss of abilities, LGBT adults especially experience discrimination caused by individual preferences. It is important to understand that individuals receiving long-term services and supports, in their individual home or in a long-term care facility, have the same right to be free from discrimination and harassment as any other individual. Providers of long-term services and supports must be made aware of how their attitudes and actions may impact the way they provide services. This presentation will explore how this population is facing discrimination in long-term care settings and possible advocacy solutions.

Presenter: Melanie McNeil, Esq., State Ombudsman and James Morehead, Jr., Social Services Program Consultant, Division of Aging Services at the Georgia Department of Human Services. Below are pictures that Melanie McNeil and James Moorhead Presented at the Georgia Gerontology Society.



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## Georgia Council on Aging 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon Event

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The Georgia Council on Aging is celebrating its 40th anniversary! GCOA was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 1977 to advise state government on aging issues. Please join the Council, state leaders and aging advocates at a celebration luncheon on October 26, 2017 at 12:30 pm at the Classic Center in Athens, GA. Please visit [www.gcoa.org/40th](http://www.gcoa.org/40th) to register and for more information.



GEORGIA COUNCIL ON AGING  
**40 GCOA**  
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS!

THE GEORGIA COUNCIL ON AGING  
INVITES YOU TO OUR

*40th Anniversary  
Celebration*

—

OCTOBER 26, 2017  
12:30 PM - 2:30 PM

THE CLASSIC CENTER  
300 N. THOMAS ST.  
ATHENS, GA 30601

REGISTER AT:  
[WWW.GCOA.ORG/40TH](http://WWW.GCOA.ORG/40TH)

QUESTIONS? CALL 404.657.5343

## **Many Still Sidestep End-Of-Life Care Planning, Study Finds** **Health Affairs July, 2017 36: 71244-1251**

For the analysis, published in the July issue of Health Affairs, researchers reviewed 150 studies published from 2011 to 2016 that reported on the proportion of adults who completed advance directives, focusing on living wills and health care power-of-attorney documents. Only 36.7% of the 800,000 people studied had completed some kind of advance directive. Of those, 29.3% completed living wills, 33.4% health care proxies and 32.2% were “undefined.”

In addition, the Medicare program began reimbursing physicians in January, 2016 for counseling beneficiaries about advance-care planning. It is very important to start the conversation with the people that you love and to have it early.

### **“Nursing Home Abuse Is the Health Care Story You Should be Following”**

This story highlights the importance of removing forced arbitration clauses by Robyn Grant, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care.

On June 5, 2017, a new CMS rule lifts the ban on nursing home arbitration agreements. CMS also introduced new requirements in the newly proposed rule, suggesting that binding arbitration agreements must contain plain language, rather than legal jargon, to be a condition of admission. Facilities would also have to post notices describing their arbitration policies in plain language for residents and visitors to see.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/protecting-our-vulnerable-from-abuse-and-neglect-the\\_us\\_5980c269e4b0d187a59690a0](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/protecting-our-vulnerable-from-abuse-and-neglect-the_us_5980c269e4b0d187a59690a0)

<https://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2017-Fact-Sheet-items/2017-06-05.html>

### **Beware of a New Social Security Scam**

The Office of Inspector General at the Social Security Administration (SSA) recently issued a fraud advisory about a new scam targeting beneficiaries. SSA has received reports from around the country about beneficiaries receiving calls from scammers impersonating SSA employees, saying the beneficiary is owed a cost of living increase. To get the increase, victims must give their personally identifying information such as name, date of birth, and Social Security numbers. Once they have this information, the scammers attempt to access the victim’s direct deposit information and may try to divert their social security benefits.

If you receive any communication that claims to be from SSA that seems suspicious, please contact your local Social Security office, or the toll-free customer service number at 1-800-772-1213.

Fraud Advisory: <https://oig.ssa.gov/newsroom/news-releases/july19-advisory>

