



Illinois Home Care Ombudsman Program Overview

Joe Danner February 2023

Purpose of the Ombudsman Program

To ensure that **residents** of long-term care facilities and **participants** who live in the community:

- Have their rights respected
- Receive quality care
- Live a dignified life at the highest practicable level



Ombudsman Program Structure

IL Department on Aging (Springfield & Chicago Offices)

State Ombudsman – Kelly Richards

Deputy State Long-Term Care Ombudsman – Chuck Miller (Central & Southern)

Deputy State Long-Term Care Ombudsman – Lee Moriarty (Northern)

Deputy State Home Care Ombudsman – Joe Danner (Statewide)

Long-Term Care Program – 17 Regional Offices

Advocate on behalf of Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities

Home Care Ombudsman Program – Staff in Springfield & Chicago

Advocate on behalf of Participants receiving in-home services
(MMAI or HCBS Waivers)

Statutory Authority for HCOP

- In August 2013, the state amended a section of the Illinois Act on Aging to expand the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to cover seniors and adults with disabilities living in the community.
- In 2014, the Home Care Ombudsman Program began providing advocacy and assistance outside of the Long-Term Care Setting.
- As of January 1st, 2017, the Home Care Ombudsman Program was restructured. Offices are located in Springfield and Chicago. Advocacy services are provided statewide.

Goal of the HCOP

To provide **education and advocacy** to participants who receive services through the Medicare Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) and/or services through select Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers in order to **reduce the risk of placement in a long-term care facility.**



Who Does the HCOP Serve?

Older adults and adults with disabilities who live in the community AND:

- Are enrolled in the Medicare Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) and/or
- Receive services from select Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Programs

Medicare Medicaid Alignment Initiative

Partnership between Federal & State Levels

How MMAI works:

- Allows eligible beneficiaries in Illinois to receive their benefits from a single Medicare-Medicaid Plan statewide
- Plan Members receive all their Medicare Parts A & B, Medicare Part D, and Medicaid covered benefits



Benefits covered by MMAI Plans

Traditional Benefits

- Doctors' Visits
- Hospital Care
- Prescription Drugs
- Dental
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
- Transportation Services (EMT & Medicaid)
- Nursing Home & HCBS Waiver Services

Additional Benefits

- Personalized Care Plan
- Care Coordination Team
- One Health Plan
- One Health Care Card
- One Phone Number to Call
- No Premiums
- No Co-Pays (for Medicare Parts A & B services)
- Help Transitioning Home from the Hospital or Nursing Home

MMAI Managed Care Organizations in IL

Aetna – all counties statewide

Blue Cross – all counties EXCEPT Champaign, Effingham, & Massac

Humana – all counties EXCEPT Jo Daviess, Macon, Massac, & Rock Island

Meridian – all counties EXCEPT Alexander, Franklin, Jackson, Macon, Massac, Pulaski, Wabash, & Williamson

Molina – all counties EXCEPT Kankakee, Lake, Massac, & Wabash



HCBS Waiver Programs

A **waiver** is a program that provides services that allow individuals to remain in their own homes or live in a community setting instead of an institution or long-term care facility. Illinois has nine HCBS waivers. Each waiver is designed for individuals with similar needs and offers a different set of services.

Waivers Served by the Home Care Ombudsman Program:

Persons with Disabilities (DHS)

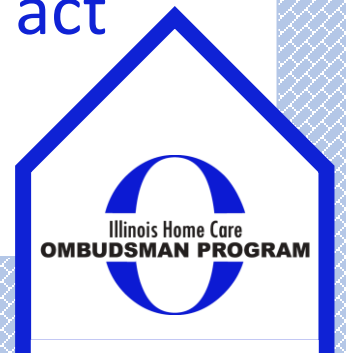
Persons with HIV or AIDS (DHS)

Persons with Brain Injuries (DHS)

Persons who are Elderly (Aging)

How Do Home Care Ombudsman Help?

- Educate participants about their rights as a recipient of MMAI or HCBS waiver services.
- Investigate and work to resolve complaints made by or on behalf of persons enrolled in MMAI with issue(s) relating to managed care services or persons receiving HCBS waiver services.
- Use problem solving as the primary means to assure that participant's rights are understood, honored, and complaints are resolved.
- Engage in PARTICIPANT-DIRECTED advocacy. Ombudsmen do not act without the permission of the participant.



How Do Home Care Ombudsman Help? (cont.)

- Assist participants with filing an appeal and/or serving as an authorized representative during the Fair Hearing Process, if necessary.
- Assist participants in filing grievances, when necessary.
- Provide referrals.
- NOT duplicate services; do not provide case management.
- All assistance and advocacy is 100% FREE OF CHARGE.



HCOP Intake Process

- Complaints and inquiries are routed through the Illinois Department on Aging's Senior Helpline, standard mail, or the Home Care Ombudsman general email inbox.
- The Deputy State Home Care Ombudsman reviews all complaints or inquiries and assigns them to a Home Care Ombudsman.
- The Home Care Ombudsman reached out to the participant to work towards complaint resolution.

Outreach Events

- State & County Fairs
- Health Fairs
- Resources Fairs
- Senior Events
- Legislative Events
- Conferences
- Always looking for more



Contact a Home Care Ombudsman if:

- the MMAI or HCBS Waiver participant feels that their **rights have been violated** by the MMAI MCO or HCBS Waiver Program.
- the MMAI or HCBS Waiver participant needs assistance with filing an **appeal** for:
 - a decrease in services hours;
 - termination of services;
 - service hours not being fulfilled according to service plan, or
 - lack of action or response by an MMAI MCO or HCBS Waiver Provider.
- the MMAI or HCBS Waiver participant needs assistance with filing a **grievance** against the MMAI MCO or HCBS Waiver Program.
- there is **a question** about services offered through the Home Care Ombudsman Program.



How to Contact the HCOP

- Call the Illinois Department on Aging's Senior Help Line and request Home Care Ombudsman Services at:
1-800-252-8966 (V) or 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

- Email the Home Care Ombudsman Program at:
Aging.HCOProgram@illinois.gov



Questions



Senior Help Line: 1-800-252-8966