

# OMBUDS BULLETIN

*I'm a bud, you're a bud, we're Ombuds!*

**July 2025**

**A MONTHLY BULLETIN PUBLISHED THROUGH THE LOUISIANA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**

## Medicaid: Louisiana's Lifeline for Aging with Dignity

Medicaid supports over 1 million Louisianans, covering vital services like nursing home care, home modifications, in-home meals, and support to age in place. For many, it's a safety net; for others, a lifeline that may be needed down the road—even those financially secure today. As the state considers future cuts, we must prepare now to preserve alternatives that uphold dignity and independence for older adults.

Together, we can protect what matters most—care, dignity, and the right to age safely at home or in a place of choice. Now is the time to advocate, innovate, and ensure no one is left without the care they may one day need. Because one day, Medicaid might be the bridge that helps us age with dignity, too.

### Upcoming Events

#### Coffee & Cases:

First Monday of the month, 9:30–11:00am

- **July 7** – A Guided Conversation with Carolyn Smith on Ethics For Ombudsmen
- **August 4** – Amy Sprout, Nursing Home Administrator and Dee Dee Blake, Social Worker—Processing Reports of Abuse: From Initial Report To Resolution.
- **September 8** – Save the Date!

### Nursing Home Residents In Action

Ombudsman Barbara Soniat had a couple of comments following last month's Coffee & Cases: "Residents in one of my homes are complaining about the high (and escalating) cost of snacks from their facility's vending machines." Barbara also shared that before Hurricane Ida, one nursing home resident opened his own business within the facility. The CNAs would shop for him, the administrator looked the other way. He ran a successful and productive business until he was discharged – to his own place via the Waiver program. HURRAH!

**More discussion on this and other innovative and empowering ways that nursing home residents "make it work" during our next Coffee & Cases.**

### Creative Expression Thrives in Long-Term Care

Artistic expression continues to flourish among nursing home residents, offering a window into resilience, imagination, and joy.

Ms. Ione Ferrand's Cross Stitch, *Lucy Makes Me Smile*, pays tribute to the beloved TV character. Her stitching captures more than just a likeness; it embodies a spirit of lightness and hope. "No matter the trouble Lucy found herself in," Ms. Ferrand shared, "she always managed to come out of it for the good—and always with a smile."



Creative activities like puzzling, embroidery, cross stitch, and coloring stimulate the brain, strengthen fine motor skills, reduce anxiety, and spark meaningful social connection—highlighting the deep and lasting benefits of creativity for the aging brain.

### Ombudsman Refresher: Do You Remember? Residents Have the Right to Choose Their Own Schedule – Including Showers

Do you remember that residents in long-term care facilities have the right to make choices about their daily routines, including when they want to wake up, go to bed, eat meals – and take a shower?

This right is protected under F-Tag 561 (Self-Determination), based on federal regulation 42 CFR §483.10(f)(1), which states:

"The resident has the right to, and the facility must promote and facilitate resident self-determination through support of resident choice, including but not limited to daily activities, schedules, and health care."

As ombudsmen, it's important to observe whether residents are truly offered choices or simply fit into the facility's schedule. Even something as basic as when a resident showers is part of honoring dignity and autonomy. Let's keep this vital conversation going.

Submit any questions, suggestions, or case examples you'd like to share to the State Office at [StateOmbudsman@la.gov](mailto:StateOmbudsman@la.gov).