

The Sentinel

The Newsletter of the Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Carol Dayton, OCAPS Chair & Consultant and Educator in the Field of Aging

OCAPS Officers

Chair

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Services

OCAPS welcomes contribu-
tions to our newsletter! If you
are aware of exciting research,
upcoming events, or promis-
ing practices drop us a line
at newsletter@ocapsohio.org
and let us know.

OCAPS is approaching its 25th anniversary, the silver one. The first meeting of this brand new statewide coalition occurred in January 1985. Dr. Georgia Anetzberger described our interesting history in an earlier issue of this newsletter. Twenty-five years after that beginning, I find myself looking for a silver lining in this difficult time of budget and staff cuts. I think I have found one. We have the opportunity to tell our Ohio legislators in stark terms the impact of the staff losses and reassignments that are happening. The case stories, and the suffering of our clients, may get more attention this time. We need to be at the head of the line when the recession really does reverse itself and available public dollars can again be debated for allocation. The advocacy that we can do now is the education of our state legislators on what APS is, how it is a mandate in the ORC and how difficult, if not impossible it is to implement with inadequate funding. Educating the decision-makers on the local, state and federal levels now about APS is an opportunity that will help down the road.

There is another possible silver lining, the increasing chance for passage of the federal Elder Justice Act. This is an ever changing story as OCAPS members receive updates on legislative activities. The most recent effort is attaching the Elder Justice Act, (EJA), as an amendment to the health care reform bill under debate in the US Senate. If passed, (no, when passed), the EJA will provide federal dollars to every state for implemen-

tation of a federal APS mandate. This is the longed for opportunity to bring elder abuse into the national focus by using mandates and funds. Federal law is what jump started the funding to child abuse years ago. Hopefully, the chance for elder abuse to gain that focus will occur during this difficult year. If you are interested in staying on top of state and federal legislation focused on elder abuse, joining OCAPS will meet that need. Please check out the new member section of the website to start the application process.

OCAPS is adapting to the hard times too. For the first time ever, our conference is a one-day event, scheduled for March 22 at the Columbus State Community College. Please note the date and plan on attending. We reluctantly made this change in recognition of the loss of travel and training dollars in most counties. We hope to have some scholarships, an effort still not concluded, since our first grant application was turned down, but our search for funds is only beginning. We are here to serve you, the ones on the front lines of adult protective and senior services. When your need for support, advocacy, inspiration and education is met, then we know the needs of the many vulnerable elders in our state can also be met with the skill, expertise and the effectiveness they deserve.

Carol Dayton, Chair
OCAPS Steering Committee
chair@ocapsohio.org

Ohio Long-Term Care Ombudsman Releases Report

Beverley Laubert, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Ohio Department of Aging

The 2008 State Ombudsman's report, available at www.aging.ohio.gov, includes details of activities during the previous calendar year as well as recommendations for future policy development.

Policy recommendations are based upon collected data and knowledge gained from ombudsmen who advocate for consumers in long-term care. The policy recommendations outlined in the 2008 report include:

- **Creation of a Unified Long-Term Care System**

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman should participate in policy development leading to the unification of the long-term care system.

- **Planned Increase in Personal Needs Allowance**

Ohio's Medicaid office should, with consumer input, examine the

\$40.00 Personal Needs Allowance for nursing home residents, and plan for an increase in State Fiscal Year 2012.

- **Guardianship Reform**

Ohio should implement standards and certification for professional guardians and make every effort to use less restrictive alternatives to guardianship.

- **Address End of Life Care Issues**

The Ohio General Assembly should pass legislation creating MOLST (Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment, honoring patient preferences) as a tool for expressing personal choice. Educational programs focusing on end of life issues should be developed and available for consumers and practitioners.

- **Implementation of Resident Councils**

The requirement for every nursing

home to have a grievance committee should be updated to establish resident-led "Resident Council" standards.

- **Ombudsman Presence in Long-Term Care**

Practices should be put in place to ensure that consumers receiving home and community-based services have access to the long-term ombudsman program.

- **Sex Offender Notification**

Consumers living in long-term care facilities must be notified when a registered sex offender is living in the same facility.

JOB POSTINGS! NEW MEMBER BENEFITS!

OCAPS is pleased to announce a new member benefit. Any member whose agency is hiring may post their position on the OCAPS website! This is an excellent opportunity to reach job seekers with experience working in elder abuse. Check out the membership page on our website, www.ocapsohio.org, for more info!

OCAPS is a statewide coalition that strives to enhance the provision of services to adults at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation through education and advocacy.

NAPSA to Honor One of Our Own

Barbara Van Wormer, Senior Services Coordinator, Lucas County Department of Job & Family Services

Each year the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) honors persons who have made a significant contribution to the field of adult protective services. One of the awards is the Spirit of NAPSA Award which is given to a front line worker who has made contributions to the development and/or continuation of services to the field.

This year the award will be presented to Elvira Awad, Adult Protective Services Worker and OCAPS member at the NAPSA Conference

to be held October 27 – 30 in San Antonio, Texas.

Elvira Awad has worked in Hardin County for 32 years. She is the sole adult protective services worker in her county. Over the years, Ms. Awad has developed relationships with Probate Court Judges, Prosecutors, and other senior services providers in her county as well as in neighboring counties, always to help her clients obtain the best available services to meet their needs. She is also a devoted and

tireless advocate for at-risk seniors. She is not afraid to speak about the need for services and for funding those services at regional meetings, both professional and community and at conferences.

As a long-time adult protective services worker, Ms. Awad is always willing to share her knowledge and she often consults with other APS workers, both new and seasoned, on those “tough” cases.

We congratulate you, Elvira Awad.

For the latest news, photos and more visit the Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services online at:

www.ocapsohio.org

From the Membership Committee...

Number Count

If you are working with seniors, you already know the challenges. Our population here in Ohio is aging and services are something difficult to arrange or even obtain. Now is the time to join OCAPS. Your membership allows you to

- Post job announcements from your agency NEW
- Receive action alerts on important legislative matters
- Receive reduced registration fees at the annual OCAPS Conference
- Have a networking base for working those APS cases
- Be able to post related jobs for free to a trained readership
- Be part of the NUMBERS which counts when the OCAPS
- Meet with legislators through the Public Policy Committee

Just click on the "Membership" button on our website, www.ocapsohio.org, print out the application and mail along with your fee to:

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