



STATE OF WISCONSIN
BOARD ON AGING AND LONG TERM CARE

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Your New Years' Resolution could benefit others!

The New Year is upon us and time to make those New Year's resolutions. One of the best resolutions to consider is volunteering. Not only is volunteering good for those being served, but it is also healthy for the volunteer as well. Giving to others helps energize the individual and spurs new growth in the volunteer's personal life. Volunteering can foster a sense of deep satisfaction when positive, authentic interpersonal connections occur.

The State of Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care has a wonderful opportunity in volunteerism for those wishing to advocate on behalf of Wisconsin's nursing home residents. Serving as a Volunteer Ombudsman offers volunteers a chance to advocate for residents living in long term care facilities by acting as "the eyes and ears" of the regional Long Term Care Ombudsmen.

If you are considering volunteering in 2012, consider being a Volunteer Ombudsman. This volunteer opportunity will yield several ways to "stretch your volunteer muscle".

Have an impact. Volunteer Ombudsman protect the rights of elderly people 60 years and older by making unannounced visits to listen and empower residents and family members who may choose to voice concerns regarding residents' care. The Volunteer Ombudsman makes a significant difference in the lives of residents through the simple gift of their presence as a weekly visitor.

Socialization. Volunteer Ombudsmen make weekly random drop-in visits to their assigned facility to meet the residents at that nursing home. Residents look forward to the visit from "their Volunteer Ombudsman". Most of the residents enjoy talking about their favorite activities, favorite food or being able to show off their gallery of pictures in photo albums or on their walls. These interactions can serve as an opening for discussions where residents can voice any concerns that they may have about the quality of their care or their quality of life.

Personal growth. Our Volunteer Ombudsmen say that they get more out of being a volunteer than they give to the residents, and we at the Board on Aging and Long Term Care know it goes both ways. The dedication and effort of our volunteers serving as advocates for Wisconsin's elderly and frail population is a great gift. The lives of the residents we serve are enhanced by our volunteers and staff at the Board on Aging and Long Term Care.

Will you consider making a New Year's resolution to volunteer as a Volunteer Ombudsman? There are numerous opportunities across the State of Wisconsin. If you would like more information please call our toll-free number at 1-800-815-0015 or visit our website: <http://longtermcare.wi.gov>.

By: *Cindy Freitag*
Volunteer Coordinator
Green Bay

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