

**Triangle J Area Agency on Aging
Ombudsman Program**

**Annual Report
For
Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee**

County: Durham

Reporting Year: 2018

Committee: Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee

Chairperson: Jeffrey L. Austin

1. Were all the homes in the county served by the committee?

The Durham County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee (ACH CAC) is responsible for conducting quarterly visits in 13 adult care homes and annual visits in 30 family care homes in Durham County. The Committee made 52 adult care and 30 family care home visits. The committee completed 100% of the quarterly adult care homes visits and 100% of the annual visits to homes licensed throughout 2018. CAC members volunteered a total of 612 hours and traveled 3036 miles in 2018.

2. Describe the educational efforts by the committee.

- Training by our ombudsman on reporting procedures for abuses of rights; preparing for an official visit; abuse, neglect, exploitation and misappropriation of property; and resident consent.
- We stayed current on the work of the Dementia Inclusive Durham initiative through our liaison to that endeavor.
- Throughout the year, we invited several guest speakers to our meetings, including:
 - Bill Lamb, President of Friends of Residents in Long-Term Care: Friends of Residents in Long-Term Care is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides support to individuals living in long term care and advocates in a collective manner for implementing public policy.
 - Wendy Jacobs, Chair of the Durham County Board of Commissioners: Ms. Jacobs discussed the Board's efforts to develop a plan to make Durham County an age-friendly community. Our committee followed up with a written report of our observations and experiences that may inform such a plan, and discussed inviting commissioners to visit a home sometime in the future.
 - Madeline Masters, Legal Aid of NC—Senior Legal Project: The Legal Aid of NC – Senior Legal Project focuses on all types of elder abuse for individuals over the age

of 60 years. The project also manages a Senior Legal Hot Line to screen, address and refer elders, their families and their caretakers to the appropriate resources.

- Stephanie Bias, North Carolina Department of Insurance: Ms. Bias discussed the Seniors Health Insurance Information Program, including Durham County's SHIIP representative - PharmAssist.
- Julia Katz presented TJCOG Livability Assessment for Local Governments. Ms. Katz discussed the way that livability assessments can inform the development of the county's aging plan.

3. Describe community involvement by the committee.

- On March 24, 2018, several members of our committee served lunch, played bingo and gave away goody bags to the residents of Faith Family Care Homes #1 and #2.
- Our Committee and Durham's Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee set up an information table at the Farmer's Market June 9 and June 16. We used this opportunity to meet members of the public and discuss the purposes of the committees and recruit new members.
- Commissioner Wendy Jacobs joined Committee Chair Jeff Austin on The 919 Podcast to discuss the county's aging plan, changing demographics, and the work of our committee. The episode aired on August 16, 2018.
- Some of our members attended workshops or activities pertinent to the purpose of our committee, including the following:
 - Community listening session on Issues Affecting Health in Durham held at Durham Center for Senior Life (DCSL)
 - Focus group for senior adults at DCSL
 - Aging Well in Durham conference
 - CAC Leadership Development
 - Direct Care Workforce Summit
 - NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse conference

4. Describe any problems encountered by the committee.

- Problems encountered during 2018 include difficulty coordinating individual schedules for adult care home visits and committee member turnover. With various work schedules and other volunteer time commitments, coordinating the minimum three members to conduct quarterly and annual visits has presented challenges. Additionally, the committee continues to experience significant turnover. Six members resigned from the committee in 2018 (compared to seven members resigned in 2017, eight members resigned in 2016 and eight members resigned in 2015). Reasons for resignation included moving out of the county and taking a job which would create a conflict of interest. During 2018, four new members were recruited and trained.

- In an effort to improve recruitment and retention on the CAC, the members were surveyed. 75% of the members responded and offered suggestions for recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers to serve. Some of the ideas included the following:
 - Share information about the CAC on Nextdoor.com, neighborhood listservs, social media, newspaper, community newsletters and public service announcements.
 - Develop a flyer to be distributed at sites where potential members may be concentrated, i.e. organizations serving the elderly or disabled.
 - Outreach to churches and faith-based groups and to communities interested in aging issues.
- The committee has benefited, however, from the regional ombudsman's improved process for onboarding new members. Now that members receive training before being appointed, the new members are better aware of committee requirements and immediately able to make visits.
- Obtaining a quorum at our meetings is sometimes a challenge.

5. Was the committee involved in grievance resolution during the year?

The ACH CAC had no involvement with grievance resolution.

6. Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the facilities in the county.

Strengths

- Quantity of adult care and family care homes throughout Durham County
- Dedication of administrators and staff in serving residents
- Quality of care provided, minimal complaints
- Utilization of programs within the Durham community to enhance life skills, and the personal development of residents
- Interest in music, including personalized music. The Music & Memory program is in effect in some homes in the county.
- Commitment to accept Medicaid patients in light of funding reductions in many facilities.
- Commitment of certain facilities to the Dementia Inclusive Durham program and research related to dementia and other aging issues.

Weaknesses

- Staff training varies from facility to facility.
- Turnover of facility administrators in corporation-owned adult care homes
- Turnover of staff providing direct care to residents
- Range of standards between facilities
- Physical condition and amenities offered based on funding and residents' ability to pay

7. Other comments.

Our September 18 meeting was cancelled due to weather and flooding of roads, and we complied with open-meetings notice requirements by posting the cancellation on the door of our conference room and by informing the county.

We are working to comply with the new statutory guidelines for our committee, as passed in HB 248, and anticipate updating our bylaws in 2019.

The ACH CAC has met program responsibilities and successfully performed the duties as outlined in North Carolina General Statute 131D-31, as amended by HB 248. The committee has conducted monthly meetings according to the committee's by-laws. Minutes from monthly meeting are submitted to the BOCC Clerk along with an attendance report.

We are grateful for the support of the county, including that of Macio Carlton, Senior Administrative Assistant to the Clerk to the Board, and Lowell Siler, County Attorney.

The ACH CAC members are passionate and committed to ensuring that adult care and family care home residents' needs are met and that they are cared for in an environment that honors their humanity. In addition, the ACH CAC will continue to partner with other groups and agencies to provide information on selecting a facility, investigating complaints, and advocating for quality care to residents.

Prepared by:

Jeff Austin, Chair (2017-2018)
Sue Roth, Chair (2019-current)

The Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman is responsible for submitting this report to the County Commissioners, the Durham County Department of Social Services, and the Division of Aging and Adult Services.