



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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What We Do – Resident/Consumer Rights and Resources

by Jamie Herrmann, Executive Director

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To wrap up our series on the services the Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) provides, we will focus on one of our most vital functions, advocating and preserving the rights of the aging person. One way we do this is through the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program that handles complaints involving long-term care services in nursing home/rehab facilities and adult care facilities, as well as for those receiving in-home and community-based long-term care services. Ombudsman help to preserve the rights and dignity of some of our most vulnerable populations.



In 2024, the Ohio Department of Aging created an initiative to target social isolation. As a part of this initiative, the Ombudsman Program ensured that every nursing home in our region received an isolated resident screening which is a way to identify residents who are socially isolated, who have no personal contact with friends or family, or who choose to self-isolate. The information gathered in the screening has been used to help these residents best. The AAA7's Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program staff and volunteers will continue this effort into 2025.

One vitally important area of focus for AAA7 is our advocacy efforts. AAA7 is part of a larger state association, the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging (o4a), and a national association, USAging. We work together at the local, state, and federal levels to support legislation for funding to provide necessary services. We strive to develop strong relationships with our elected officials by participating in state advocacy conferences and visits to Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, as well as scheduling meetings in the district.

An additional way the AAA7 promotes advocacy is by providing education and resources to all via our website. Our website includes links to several frequently inquired services including caregiver support, home-delivered meals, Medicare information, transportation, wellness, and a quick referral link, just to name a few. As always, the AAA7's Resource Center is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm to answer any questions about resources in our communities and to arrange an in-home assessment at no charge to learn about options further. We can be reached at 1-800-582-7277 or email info@aaa7.org.

AAA7 programs are available to help older adults and those of any age living with a disability remain safely and independently in their residence of choice. Contact us today for more information or if you or someone you know could benefit from our services.

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