

## The Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

### An Advocacy Program for Hospice Consumers

Hospice care is based on the philosophy that, at the end of your life, you deserve to have relief from pain and distress from other physical symptoms. Your medical, social, physical, emotional and spiritual needs are met through the use of a interdisciplinary hospice team. The team consists of these hospice caregivers:

- \* Your doctor
- \* The hospice medical director
- \* Nurses
- \* Home health aides
- \* Social worker
- \* Chaplain
- \* Volunteers

Hospice caregivers are comfortable talking and listening to consumers and their families about end of life issues and concerns.

Hospice is life affirming and strengthens your role in making informed decisions about your care.

You can receive hospice care in:

- Your home
- A nursing facility
- An assisted living setting or
- A residential care facility

Hospice caregivers do not take the place of your doctor or other caregivers. They are a team that works with your other caregivers to provide you and your family with the best possible care.

Hospice care is for all individuals with a life limiting illness, including Alzheimer's and other related dementias.

Hospice care is paid for by Medicare, MaineCare and private insurance. The hospice benefit does not increase the cost of your premiums. It is an elected benefit under Medicare that covers the following: medications related to your terminal illness, services of the hospice team members and durable medical equipment. You can still access Medicare Part A, B and D for services and medications unrelated to your terminal diagnosis.

You can usually receive hospice care for up to six months, but care may be extended longer, if certain guidelines are met.

If you have trouble accessing hospice care or are having problems with your hospice services you can contact the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program at 621-1079 or 1-800-499-0229 for assistance.

### What assistance can the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program provide?

A Swedish word, Ombudsman (pronounced om-budz-man) is a specially trained advocate who is given authority under federal and Maine law to investigate and resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, long-term care or home care consumers.

- An ombudsman investigates and resolves complaints and advocates for consumers with facility staff and hospice providers.
- Educates consumers, families, and providers about consumer rights under the Medicare Hospice Benefit.
- Answers questions and supplies information.
- Guides consumers through the sometimes complex requirements of the Medicare Hospice Benefit.