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## **Fact Sheet for the Denver Regional Council of Governments' Ombudsman Program**

The Ombudsman Program was created in Colorado in 1975 to provide advocates to residents who live in long term care facilities. The Older Americans Act mandates that Ombudsman do everything in their power to protect the health, safety, rights and welfare of residents. We are the voice for people in long term care who are unable or unwilling to speak for themselves.

### **DRCOG's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program has:**

- 11 paid Ombudsman and 66 certified volunteers
- 85 nursing homes with 9,112 beds
- 270 assisted living residences with 7,858 beds

### **Ombudsmen are responsible for:**

- Visiting nursing homes monthly and assisted living residences quarterly
- Investigating and resolving any complaints received on behalf of residents
- Educating the public about long term care and helping consumers choose a community that best meets their needs
- Providing education to residents, families and staff on residents' rights and quality of life issues
- Advocating for improvements in legislation, policies and funding affecting long term care

### **2008 Statistics**

- 5,644 complaints investigated in 2008
- Top 3 complaints are discharge/eviction problems, dignity, respect and choice issues and general care issues such as response to call lights and medication administration

For questions or additional information, please contact Penny Cook, Ombudsman Program Manager at 303-480-6799 or [pcook@drcog.org](mailto:pcook@drcog.org).