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Acting State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

## PERSON-CENTERED STAFF ENGAGEMENT PROJECT 2ND SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 30, 2018

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is pleased to submit to the Ohio Department of Medicaid the second semi-annual project status report on the use of Resident Protection Funds. As proposed, the Office has launched an ambitious project, bringing person-centered staffing solutions and leadership development to Ohio nursing facilities.

The Person-Centered Staff Engagement Project launched in spring of 2017. With the critical participation of regional project ombudsman, the project has already seen proactive activity on the part of participating nursing homes. Nursing facilities have attended the statewide conference and quarterly regional roundtables, created project specific action plans and are developing the staff stability “bundle” of practices to fully realize the intent of the project. We thank them for their trust in this project to achieve their organizational goals.

### **PROJECT STATUS**

After a year of project implementation, the Person-Centered Staff Engagement Project has encountered some marked successes and overcome several challenging situations discussed below. Planning to make an impactful second year of the project has commenced and we expect a successful conclusion in the spring of 2019.

### **PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

As designed in the grant proposal, the Project funded attendance for representatives from the participating nursing homes at the Person-Centered Care Coalition’s statewide conference in November 2017. Through the Project’s involvement, the Coalition ensured that keynotes and every break-out period highlighted at least one session that discussed challenges related to staff retention, leadership and person-centered approaches to staffing. Though not every participating home was able to send a representative, 166 individuals were able to attend. Evaluations of the conference were very positive. Project Ombudsmen staffed an informational booth to inform non-participating homes about the activities being offered. The booth featured resource materials including the Toolkit and CMS Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes Toolkit which will feature in the coming year’s project activity.

The second statewide training session was held November 2017 at the Jessing Center at the Pontifical College Josephinum and was attended by almost 250 individuals representing the participating facilities,

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regional project ombudsmen and program directors, the MyCare Ohio Plans, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman and the Ohio Department of Aging. CEUs were offered for Licensed Nursing Home Administrators and through the Ohio Board of Nursing.

Each regional program ombudsman has held at least one quarterly roundtable attended by participating facilities. Agendas included follow-up and discussion of lessons learned at the November event. State Office staff liaisons attend these roundtables to participate and monitor the Staff Engagement Project. Roundtable discussions often lead to additional technical assistance for participating homes.

Other pertinent activities:

- The State Office has added a monthly SEP ombudsman teleconference in response to a request for additional opportunity to share information across regions.
- SEP ombudsmen have shared resources and tools across regions and assisted with onboarding new SEP ombudsmen in the three regions where there was turnover.

In preparation for the next period of the project, which will include development of Resident Council Interview Committees in willing participating facilities and the Resident Council Coalition launch, Staff Engagement Project Ombudsmen conducted a baseline review of resident councils in participating facilities and in other homes of similar size and profile. The informal review sought to inform the project by identifying strong operational practices and person-centered facility support of such councils. The Project Ombudsmen submitted their findings to the State Office which utilized them toward development of a project-specific resident council toolkit which will be shared with project ombudsmen.

Several Staff Engagement Project Ombudsman developed a conference presentation proposal that will be submitted to the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care to share lessons learned and project principles. If accepted, travel and expenses may be offset by decreased spending in a region that will have a part-time project ombudsman in year two, described below. If not, travel and expenses would be the responsibility of their respective regional programs out of their existing award.

At the request of the State Office, SEP Ombudsmen have reached out to nursing homes in the Special Focus Facility program to share resources and invite their key staff and corporate representatives to SEP conferences to offer quality improvement opportunities in these homes.

### ***PARTICIPATION UPDATE***

The project ombudsmen are working with 121 nursing facilities (goal was 100) in the Nursing Home Quality Improvement Project. Four homes dropped out of the project: three left when their corporate leadership decided against further participation; another left after key staff turnover proved a barrier to continued participation. Project ombudsmen recruited additional homes to join the project which left our total participant count above our initial goal of 100. Catch up work, conducting baseline staff surveys, on-boarding new staff and collecting quality data, was required to bring those homes to the same level as those that joined early. Any additional loss of participants due to attrition will not be replaced due to the effort involved in covering a year's worth of work and the lack of time to get the homes actively engaged in staff stability action steps to impact our project evaluation.

REGION	TOTAL	COUNTIES REPRESENTED
1	10	Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton, Warren
2	10	Clark, Darke, Greene, Montgomery
3	13	Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam
4	11	Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Lucas, Williams, Wood
5	10	Ashland, Crawford, Knox, Richland, Seneca, Wyandot
6	10	Delaware, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway
7	10	Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Pike, Ross, Scioto
8	6	Athens, Morgan, Perry, Washington
9	10	Belmont, Coshocton, Guernsey, Holmes, Jefferson, Muskingum, Tuscarawas
10a	11	Cuyahoga, Medina
10b	10	Portage, Stark, Summit, Wayne
11	10	Ashtabula, Columbiana, Mahoning, Trumbull
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>121</b>	

An additional challenge has been the significant turnover in key personnel at the facility level. In the year of active project work, the Staff Engagement Project Ombudsmen have reported the following turnover in the following areas:

Change in the LNHA	Change in the DON	Change in other significant management personnel	Facility owner or operator change
25.0%	33.1%	25.0%	16.1%

In some homes, these positions have had more than 200% turnover in the past year. At least two homes have had three LNHA's in the past year. Sustaining momentum is difficult at best in these situations. The evaluation may reflect outcomes varying in those homes with lower turnover. A corporate approach to reducing management turnover may prove useful in the next project period as the facility-based staff have a decided impact on project participation. Loss of key staff disrupts project activity and commitment.

### **PROJECT ADJUSTMENTS**

The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman’s Office saw significant personnel changes in December 2017 as Beverley Laubert began to serve as the Interim Director of the Department of Aging and Erin Pettegrew, primary manager of this project, was asked to step in as Acting State Long-Term Care Ombudsman limiting the time she has been able to devote to the project. The other State Office staff person assigned to the project has taken more responsibility and is also temporarily serving as the part-time SEP project ombudsman in one region (see below).

Four of the regional ombudsman programs have had staff turnover in the SEP ombudsman role.

- One instance was due to an area agency on aging choosing to discontinue serving as a regional ombudsman program sponsoring agency. This region had the fewest participating nursing homes and the new sponsoring agency anticipates replacing the project ombudsman with a part-time FTE. In the meantime, a State Office staff person already assigned to the project has been ensuring no interruption in activity.
- Three regions lost staff to other job opportunities. We attribute this to the uncertainty in being in a time-limited project position because both expressed regret in leaving the position due to the satisfaction in the job and its goals. Those regions have replaced the project ombudsmen with full-time staff; other liaisons have stepped up to share knowledge and tips.

Another challenge to our Project approach is that the Person-Centered Care Coalition will not be hosting another conference in 2018. We intend to redirect the funds designated for conference attendance to supporting project-relevant speakers to attend regional project roundtables to offer opportunities for closer learning from exceptional trainers while saving participating homes the expense of travel to a conference.

### **Action plans**

Each participating facility has focused in this reporting period on a collection of staffing interventions to move their performance toward better staff retention and training and reduction of staff turnover. Project ombudsman worked with the homes toward developing those action plans and reported the highest priority areas for those homes.

Key action plan areas:	Priority level					Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
Huddles	17	45	9	10	2	<b>83</b>
Consistent Assignment	36	14	13	7	5	<b>75</b>
STNA in care plan mtgs	2	7	17	13	9	<b>48</b>
Recruitment	18	4	9	5	4	<b>40</b>

On Boarding/Training/Mentoring new employees	10	12	4	5	6	<b>37</b>
Staff recognition	3	4	5	11	14	<b>37</b>
Resident preferences (PELI)	4	2	9	7	6	<b>28</b>
Other Staff Communication	5	1	7	8	5	<b>26</b>
Tracking Turnover/Retention	4	3	7	3	1	<b>18</b>
Stay/Exit Interviews	4	4	1	2	4	<b>15</b>
Interviewing	4	1	4	2	0	<b>11</b>
Other	3	1	2	1	2	<b>9</b>
Total	<b>110</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>58</b>	

The April project training event focused on reducing the use of antipsychotics through better clinical practices built on improved staff engagement. In the next project period, we expect the action plans to shift toward more clinical focus areas.

## **SPENDING**

**See attached Disbursement Activity Report**

### **Contact**

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