

Robert G. Bethell Joint Committee on HCBS and KanCare Oversight Committee

Testimony by Kerrie J. Bacon, KanCare Ombudsman November 18, 2016

Chairman, Senators and Representatives, Good morning!

I'm Kerrie Bacon, the KanCare Ombudsman. I appreciate the opportunity to be here and share information with you regarding an update of the KanCare Ombudsman's office and the activities for the third quarter of 2016. There are three items I would like to bring to your attention today. Ombudsman information resources are in the red folder you received.

First, the third-quarter report is on the left-hand side. You will notice on page one that the contacts are down from the first and second quarters but still reflect an increase over the average of the last eight quarters (up 32 percent). The rest of the report is available for your review at your convenience.

Second, please pull out the one-page document on the left side regarding Core Elements for the KanCare Ombudsman. We will take a few minutes to go through this document together.

Finally, an update on the Ombudsman Volunteer program:

- There are 10 active volunteers. Four are in Olathe, two of those have decided that they will cover additional timeframes/days because they are enjoying their work; six active volunteers are in Wichita.
- We are in the process of recruiting volunteers for the KC/Wyandotte area. In the past two weeks the Volunteer Coordinator has released a radio public service announcement in the KC metro and Wichita areas, had an article published in a bilingual Hispanic newspaper in the KC area, and is getting recruitment materials published with the local AAA's and Livable Neighborhood task force in Wyandotte County.
- We have college students and retirees participating as volunteers and all are very excited to be involved in the program.
- To become a volunteer, you have to fill out an application, go through a background check and an interview with the Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor. Then there are 30 hours of training and mentoring that includes tests to ensure that the volunteer understands the materials. After that the Volunteer Coordinator/Supervisor will spend time with the volunteer until they feel comfortable volunteer working alone. Then there is continuing education and ongoing support on a daily basis.
- The three area codes that are being served by the two volunteer satellite offices at this time are 913, 620 and 316.
- The volunteers are helping potential applicants by answering questions and providing assistance with filling out KanCare applications by phone and, if needed, in person at the volunteer office.

This concludes my report. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

Joint Committee – HCBS &
KanCare Oversight
Date: 12-18-16
Attachment: 37

Volunteer Testimonies for the Ombudsman's Office

Call at Johnson County Volunteer Satellite Office (Olathe):

Volunteer took call from a senior citizen, "Jane Doe." Jane had recently moved to the state of Kansas. She wanted to know if she needed to reapply for Medicaid assistance now that she was in a different state. Volunteer asked if she had stopped her account in her former state. She said that she had. Volunteer told Jane that each state was different, and that she needed to apply in Kansas.

She then asked for help filling out the application. An appointment was made to call her back the next week. Jane was called the next week and assistance was given over the phone taking the application line by line.

Volunteer suggested that Jane call Medicare and her supplemental insurance provider to confirm which parts and what type of insurance she had currently. She said that she would do that before our next week's call to finish the application over the phone. The application information and questions were completed on the next week's call.

In the meantime, the volunteer sent her the *Assistance for People Who Are Uninsured* link so she could get immediate medical attention. Volunteer also sent the *MCO Value Added Services* Internet link, so that she could make an educated choice when selecting her MCO preference.

Jane called back the next week to ask for another application due to using the first one as a rough draft. The application was sent. Volunteer also gave her the Clearinghouse number in case she needed it.

Pat – Trained Volunteer for 4 ½ months

Call at Southern Kansas Volunteer Satellite Office (Wichita):

"I got a call from "Sue", a close friend of mine while I was volunteering. We had lunch together one week with another friend, and I explained that I volunteered with the Ombudsman's office, the type of help that I was being trained to give and when I volunteered. The next Tuesday when I came in, she called the Ombudsman's line looking for help.

Her father-in-law was very sick and she was looking for coverage for him. Being a capable member of the family, she was the one who handled a lot of the issues surrounding his care. He was in a nursing home and needed KanCare to help him. After sending in an application they were denied coverage and I was able to figure out they had sent in a Children and Family application rather than the Elderly/Disabled application. A correct application was sent to them by our office, the family filled it out and sent it in with documentation, and the father-in-law was eventually determined eligible by the state. Sadly he passed roughly a month before being approved, however KanCare was able to backdate the coverage to help pay for his end of life costs. This was a personal victory for me because I was able to take what I have learned as a volunteer and help a friend through a very difficult time."

Joanne – Trained Volunteer for 1 year