



**Patient  
Ombudsman**


# Long-Term Care Home Concerns

Family Councils Ontario Webinar  
May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021



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# What We Oversee



141  
Public  
Hospitals



630+  
Long-term  
Care Homes



Home and  
Community  
Care Support  
Services

### What is a Patient Ombudsman?

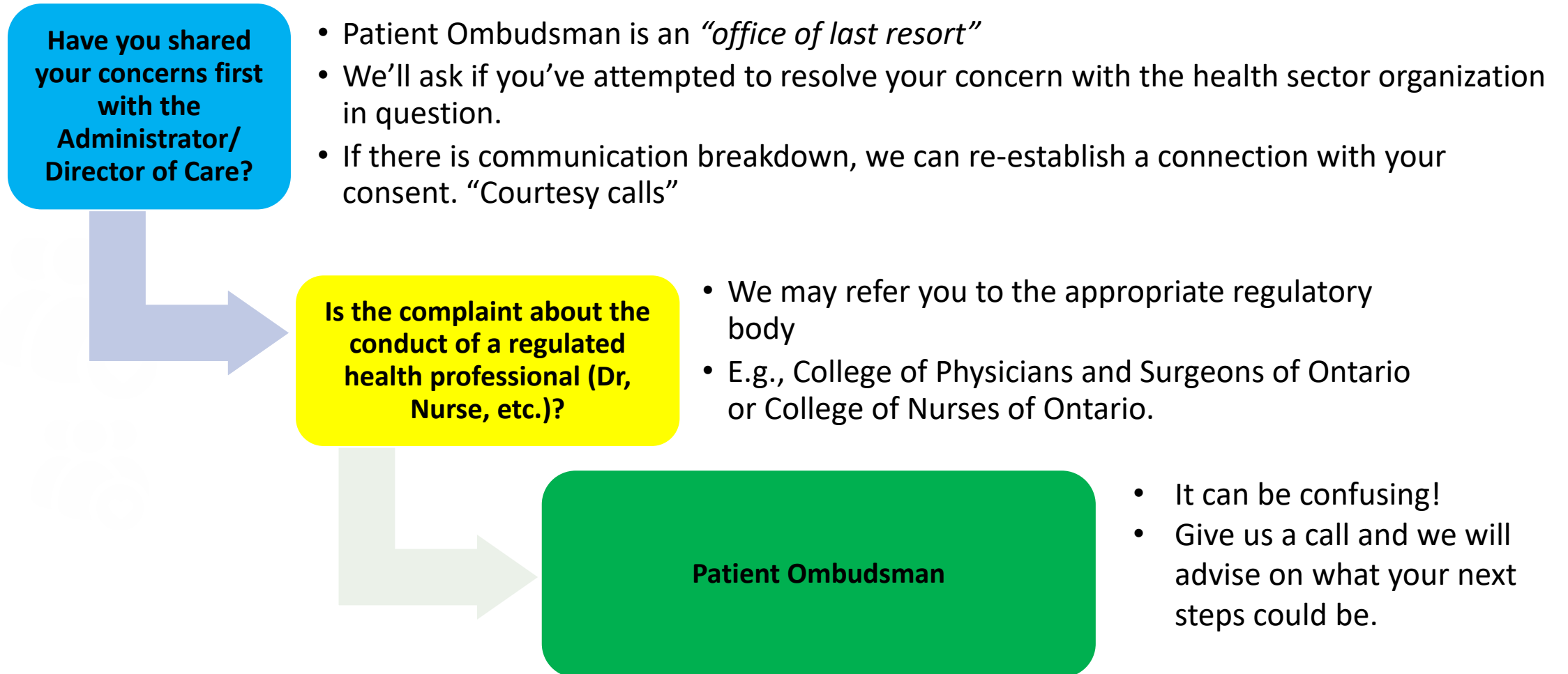
- We offer a free complaints resolution service to all Ontarians.
- We can hear concerns/complaints from patients/residents or their caregivers about a negative healthcare experience.
- We work with all sides to determine a meaningful resolution.
- When needed, we can conduct a formal investigation.

More →

### What is a Patient Ombudsman?

- We are an “*office of last resort*” meaning you must first make a complaint with the organization in question.
- We look into the fairness of a situation.
- We help navigate a complex healthcare system and refer appropriately.
- We share our findings with members of the health system to try and prevent the same issues from happening to others.

## Where Patient Ombudsman fits in the puzzle of healthcare concerns/complaints



# Honouring voices and experiences



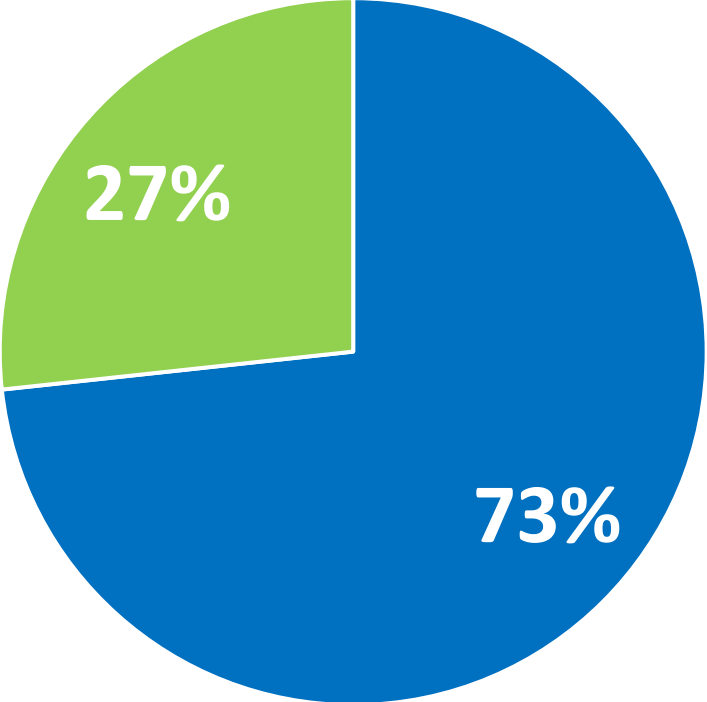
Complaints to Patient  
Ombudsman from  
residents, caregivers and  
staff about COVID-19.



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# COVID-Related Complaints about Long-term Care Homes (March 2020 to April 2021)

- COVID-Related Complaints
- Not specific to COVID



The COVID-19 crisis appears to have encouraged many people to bring forward long-standing concerns about long-term care homes.

# COVID-Related Complaints about Long-term Care Homes

Complaint Theme	March – June 2020 / Wave 1 239 complaints	July 2020 – April 2021 276 complaints
Visitation	39%	38%
Infection Prevention & Control	43%	19%
Poor Communication	30%	17%
Quality of Care & Treatment	26%	17%
<b>Restrictions &amp; Isolation</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Staffing Shortages	32%	10%
COVID-19 Testing	12%	8%
Personal Protective Equipment	16%	5%



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## Some of the stories we heard



“I’m afraid I won’t be able to see my dad.”

“Who will help with feeding?”

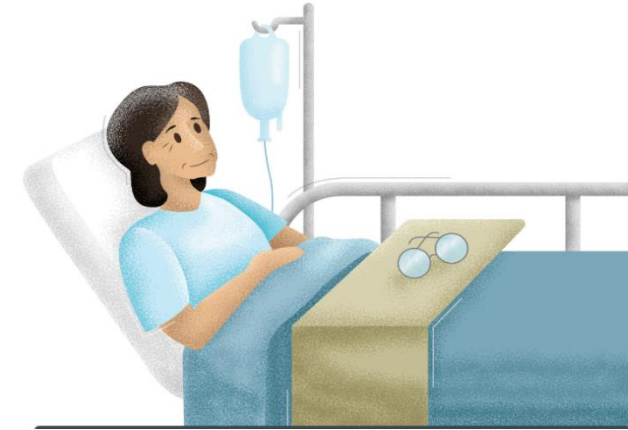
“They are all alone.”

“No one is calling me back.”

“I don’t think they have enough staff.”

“My mom is in the same room with another resident who might have COVID!”

“My dad died and I didn’t get to say goodbye.”



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## Policy recommendations around future outbreaks

In early October Patient Ombudsman published a Special Report.

The purpose of the report was to honour the voices and experiences of residents, families/caregivers and staff to learn from the first wave of the pandemic.

**Patient Ombudsman's four policy recommendations:**

1. Backstops and contingency for all healthcare providers

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2. A change in approach to visitation

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3. Dedicated resources for communication

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4. Whistleblower protections

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## Current Long-Term Care Work

- We continue to respond to COVID-19 complaints and non-COVID19 complaints with case loads at record highs.
- Systemic investigation into resident and caregiver experiences continues with deep dives on three to four homes that managed an outbreak.
- Provincial survey to gather additional feedback from families/caregivers, residents and staff. (3 surveys)
- Special Report 2 – due out this summer.
- On-going engagement and awareness with Family Councils & Resident Councils (we are happy to attend one of your monthly meetings!)

### **Long-term care homes with COVID-19 Outbreaks**

Patient Ombudsman's investigation is focused on:

- Visitation restrictions and protocols.
- Communications including the timing and type of information that was shared with residents and families.
- Staffing levels over the course of the outbreak.
- Infection Prevention and Control practices and protocols.
- Access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

More →

### **Long-term care homes with COVID-19 Outbreaks**

Patient Ombudsman's next steps include:

- Analysis and synthesis of all witness interviews and related evidence.
- Report writing and issuing of recommendations.
- Opportunity for response from long-term care homes subject to the investigation.
- Issuing final report to government, long-term care home sector and public in early 2022.
- Opportunity for the long-term care community to reflect on their experiences.



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**Patient Ombudsman wants  
to know your experience in  
long-term care!**



**Add your voice to our  
COVID-19 and long-term care  
experience survey**



### COVID-19 Experience Survey

- We know that not everyone feels comfortable voicing their concerns through a formal complaints process.
- Provides an alternative opportunity for those in the long-term care community to share their concerns.
- For residents, staff and families/caregivers.
- Surveys are anonymous to encourage everyone to share their stories.
- Office can provide any necessary accommodation support for residents.
- Findings to be released in September 2021.



# Questions

