



**Kansas Advocates
for
Better Care**

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**Kansas Department on Aging Public Meeting on the Budget
Comments from Kansas Advocates for Better Care**

July 11, 2006

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Kansas Advocates for Better Care (KABC) continues to appreciate the Department's openness to discussing their budget and seeking comments.

First and foremost Kansas needs a greater number of licensed nurses and certified nurse aides in the long-term care setting. This concern is well documented. National studies identify the need for more nursing staff in nursing homes and have determined that a minimum of 4.13 nursing staff hours per nursing home resident per day is required to maintain residents at their highest practicable level of physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being. As of May 2005, the Kansas average was only 3.53 nursing staff hours. As well, about one fourth of the Kansas nursing homes provide nursing staff at a rate of fewer than 3 hours per resident day. A partial solution is that the Medicaid reimbursement formula could be adjusted to increase reimbursement for homes that provide the recommended minimum of nursing staff.

Second, the public needs to be informed about resolution/results of calls to the Abuse Hotline. According to a KDOA attorney's presentation at the Governor's Conference on Aging, "In Calendar Year 2005, KDOA received 4,814 complaints involving health care facilities." As consumers, we would appreciate learning more about the results of the investigations. And, in cases where ANE is substantiated, we believe that a system for victim reparation should be initiated.

Third, we are aware that CMS has set a certain small number (three) of "poor quality providers" of nursing home care to be inspected more frequently than once a year. We suggest that all "poor quality providers" should be inspected more frequently than once a year. Frequency of inspections of poor quality providers should not rely upon complaint investigations.

Fourth, we believe that KDOA should make results of all licensed adult care home inspections available on their web site.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.
Deanne Bacco, Executive Director