

Kerrie Bacon, Executive Director

Laura Kelly, Governor

## **KanCare Ombudsman Office Survey**

**Available to the public to complete: 10/20/2021- 11/12/2021**

Data pulled November 19, 2021; 8:42 am

### **Q2 - Who are you? (Choose 1)**

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Current KanCare member	9.89%	26
2	Past KanCare member	1.90%	5
3	Family member of a current/past member	16.73%	44
4	Provider	12.93%	34
5	Community organization	17.11%	45
6	MCO	14.07%	37
7	State employee	12.55%	33
8	Other	14.83%	39
	Total	100%	263

#### **“Other” Responses**

ADRC	Independent Living Coordinator
ADRC	Keys for Networking
advocacy organization	KFAN
Advocate	LMSW, ACHP-MSW
Association	Nurse
Association	Nursing Home Employee
CHW	Parent Educator
Community health worker	PE Coordinator
CPAAA ACM	Practicum Student
disability advocate	Public health
Father of KanCare member	Public Health
Former Biller	Retired NFMH Director of Nursing
Guardian	School
guardian for current member	Volunteer
Hospital System	Volunteer

### Q3 - What language do you speak at home?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	English	95.11%	253
2	Spanish	2.63%	7
3	Other	2.26%	6
	Total	100%	266

#### “Other” responses

ASL

French, German

Dzongkha (Note: A Sino-Tibetan language native to Bhutan)

American Sign Language

Portuguese

### Q4 - How often have you used the KanCare Ombudsman Office for help or resources?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Never	41.89%	111
2	1-2 times	31.70%	84
3	Multiple times	26.42%	70
	Total	100%	265

### Q5 - Did you get an answer to your concern?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	20.27%	30
2	Yes	79.73%	118
	Total	100%	148

### Q17 - You said on the prior answer you did not get an answer to your concern.

If you would like someone to follow up with that concern or need help with a new issue, please leave your name and phone number. If you do not want follow-up, go ahead to the next question.

Three names and contact information were provided.

## Q6 - How was your experience of working with the KanCare Ombudsman Office?

#	Question	Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Total
1	They were respectful.	85.94%	110	10.94%	14	3.13%	4	128
2	They were encouraging.	76.98%	97	17.46%	22	5.56%	7	126
3	They were helpful.	74.22%	95	14.84%	19	10.94%	14	128
4	They shared good resources.	69.29%	88	19.69%	25	11.02%	14	127

## Q7 - What worked well when you used the KanCare Ombudsman Office?

### Problem Solved

- The guy we talked to took care of the problem.
- They understood my concerns and addressed them.
- The solutions that they provided were spot on and helpful totally.
- Fast with the response! Gave me contact information!
- They took care of my problem, which 15 calls to the main number had been unable to resolve.
- Quick response
- Direct email access to a person, rather than sitting on hold for multiple hours trying to reach someone.
- Having a direct number and previous experience with the office.
- They were always willing to talk and assist with finding answers. They attended a meeting with care facility when needed.
- quick response
- Emailing them directly with questions
- Listened to it concern and pointed us in the right direction for resolution.
- They were nice.
- This helped us to get a youth approved for a PRTF at Lake Mary.
- Being able to speak directly to the ombudsman.

- I was having difficulty with the website and finding the resources needed. The call taker was patient and kind. Not only provided the direct link, but also helped me walk through the website from the main page to multiple areas of resources. They were very knowledgeable about the KanCare Ombudsman website and answered all my questions. I have been able to direct Kansas citizens as well as providers to the website to find training, resources (that's a big one!), basic answers, and the phone number to call for additional help. I receive calls from across the state from asking for resources for individuals without insurance. The call takers and their desire to help has helped more individuals statewide than they know. Thank you.

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- Kerrie is most helpful.

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- Sharing and they are willing to learn something new from the receiving end rather than only relying on providers or system

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- The response was prompt and what I needed to know.

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- Aiding consumers to utilize their resource information and access support.

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- She provided me with information needed for a resident.

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- Sharing information, assisting to advocate for KanCare members when they have contacted the Ombudsman Office and resolving those concerns, education/explanation when KanCare Members misunderstand or have expectations outside of the policy/criteria of programs.

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- My questions were answered immediately

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- I was able to get information on other steps I needed to take to insure the proper care, services, etc. I needed for my family member. Was able to get much information regarding the COVID rules and what I could and could not do as well.

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- If I got in touch with someone, they were good about telling me where to look next for assistance.

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- Email is great as we stay very busy. It is nice to send an email and get an answer within a timely manner.

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- issue was looked into and information was provided

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- They were very nice on the phone and had a lot of information to provide.

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- Willing to assist in any way possible

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- They were usually able to answer my question or get someone at the MCO to respond when MCO was giving me the run around.

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- It has been a couple of years, but I was able to get great information about the program, resources to share with the population I serve, and insights on effective communication tips when talking to the MCOs.

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- They attended a care plan meeting at a nursing facility for a resident in a difficult situation.

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- The issue was resolved very quickly.

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- Respectful folks, but not more knowledgeable than I. What they could offer is a direct path to those who could help that I was not able to do myself.

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- It is varied with each issue. What is the best is Kerri. She really does a fine job.

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- We were able to get more action taken into investigating a claim with one of the MCOs that was denied more than once for a client we were advocating for.

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- When I got an answer from the Clearinghouse that didn't make any sense, the Ombudsman volunteer did a three-way call with me and the Clearinghouse. Makes such a difference when people know the right questions to ask and speak the same terminology (and I believe I understand KanCare better than the average person)

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- Ability to use KanCare Ombudsman email to support client's needs and emailed resources.

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- this was a resource to use when we had exhausted all others and hit a wall

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- We've worked primarily with Kerrie and she is responsive and follows up when needed. She is compassionate and asks clarifying questions when she doesn't fully understand the situation.

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- It gave me a resource that I could use to answer my doubts with the application process and estate recovery. I tried to locate the answer myself online and through phone conversations and was unsuccessful. Until I found the Ombudsman Office, I was completely lost. I appreciated the help that I got when I called.

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- To be able to explain the issue better and hear feed back from them

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- Getting information pertaining to membership voucher.

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- Reaching out via email they are very responsible.

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- I have always had great experiences working with the Ombudsman's office, and Kerrie Bacon in particular. She is one of the most reliable and helpful resources I have encountered given the difficult cases that we are presented with. I always appreciate her knowledge and willingness to do what is right for our members. Thank you, Kerrie!

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- Knowledgeable staff, fast response, helpful and encouraging, memory of past contacts, advice.

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- The Ombudsman office took the time to listen to my concerns, empathized with my frustration, provided me with next steps, and also took initiative to make things happen that I did not have the power to do.

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- Response to resolve the issue.
- Thoughtful and effective response; contact information readily available.
- Received a prompt response back on an e-mail I sent.
- They answered my questions promptly.
- Getting information I did not have before I called
- referred many members family members

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### **Good Resources**

- You get the feeling that they really care about locating appropriate information and/or resources.
- Valuable resources
- Knowledge of resources.
- I only used the website and did not work with a person but I did find what I was looking for.
- useful resources!

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### **Not resolved**

- She was respectful and offered resources. I appreciate that, but with I was too afraid to call the resources
- They told me how to appeal, which I already knew and had done prior. That was all the help I received.
- NOTHING!
- Nothing.
- He was nice, but he did not do anything different than what I had done before.
- Good listener without follow through and then didn't answer my phone calls
- Kerrie is AMAZING - but there is still no resolution or help for the issues I am enduring
- In most cases good help for residents. But in one case no help for at least one resident.
- They returned the call quicker than indicated. I called because my son's issue was unusual and was having difficulty getting his KC application on line to submit. They did not have any suggestions on what was going on with that on-line program but indicated I could submit a paper application.
- I've referred families needing assistance dealing with issues related to concerns about coverage/lack of coverage. Families feel listened to and supported but

didn't really get the additional resources they were looking for, mainly because they don't exist, for the most part.

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**Other**

- It's nice that there is one.
  - Gina is always great to work with and we are happy that she is our Region 7 Support. (Note: this is a Long-Term Care Regional Ombudsman)
  - I actually received a call back two weeks after my outreach.
  - working together
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### Q8 - Do you have a positive experience you would like to share?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	20.63%	26
2	No	79.37%	100
	Total	100%	126

### Q9 - Please share your positive experience here:

**Problem Solved**

- After over a year of trying to deal with Medicaid just this call took care of the problem. What a relief!!!
- Kerrie takes your information and gets an answer for you.
- It took almost two years to resolve issue, but they were so very helpful. We finally resolved the issue and they were with me every step of the way.
- I was able to get my daughter help after a hospitalization with necessary equipment and was given resources on how to do this.
- The nursing home was threatening to put my mother out on the curb (evict) her from the nursing home because it took so long for Medicaid to be approved. The unpaid bill was mounting up and we were trying to sell her house. Eventually the house sold, we paid them the balance due and finally, after 16 months, the Medicaid was approved. The ombudsman listened to us, talked to the nursing home, and helped us immensely.
- Please see my answer to question: What worked well when you used the KanCare Ombudsman Office?
- Each time I have reached out to Kerrie she has either assisted or pointed me in the direction to be assisted.
- Families with children with disabilities needing assistance on what services that the waivers provide and how the process works, resources in the community at large to assist in overall consumer well-

being that can be accessed by all Kansans. How to fill out KanCare applications and answer specific questions they may have allows a neutral third party for guidance.

- Karrie Bacon was very compassionate, sincere & caring. She listens well before engaging.
- I needed help navigating the steps to insure my family member was getting proper care and services in the facility she is at. I also needed to know what steps I needed to take to remedy a problem we were having. I got great information and was directed to several options I had no idea about. Though the situation is still unresolved, I feel confident that I have good advice and direction from the ombudsman.
- It took over a year but finally problem was solved.
- My MCO (UHC) was refusing to pay my Rx copays for my part D plan. After several months and different excuses or flat refusals from MCO, I called ombudsman. Ombudsman's office then contacted MCO. While the issue still took more time and energy to resolve, the ombudsman's office was able to put me in contact with the person at MCO who ultimately got the issue resolved.
- The clearinghouse told me I had been banned from my Mother's account, despite me being her power of attorney for medical decisions. When I called the Ombudsman's Office they thought that sounded really odd and conducted a three-way call with the Clearinghouse which resolved the issue immediately! I can't tell you how relieved I was to get the issue resolved. My Mother was in the hospital and needed FE Waiver services in place to discharge. My mental state was fragile and the Ombudsman's Office volunteers were so kind!!!
- My ward lost his HCBS services when he damaged property at his residential providers. He was charged with damage to property and went to jail. (The offense was all about his disability-problems regulating and not getting the supports he needed when he became upset. ) We were told jail was for a few days and he would be released. The judge did authorize a recognizance bond for release, but my ward had lost his HCBS funding and so he had no place to go to live (no residential services). He sat in jail for 8 months for an offense that carried the presumption of probation if he would be convicted. It was a catch 22... the judge wouldn't release him until he had the supports he needed to make it in the community (residential services). Residential services could not begin until he was released. We tried everything. It was so frustrating . Although he was on a disability pod, there was no real assistance...no one read him our letters, helped him make a commissary order for soap, shampoo, helped him understand how to work the phone system for visitation, etc. Thank you so much. The ombudsman was instrumental in getting the ok for residential services to be set up while my ward was in jail so that he could be released to that provider. The ombudsman also got the jail to agree to allow a BASIS screening while he was in jail... something that we had not been able to do even working through social work at the jail.
- We had a member that needed to get into the state hospital and were running into numerous obstacles. Kerrie intervened and we were able to get our member into the treatment needed.
- They have always answered quickly via email.
- We have a member who is experiencing difficulty with placement. She has been denied by 58 facilities and the parents are understandably upset and scared. With Kerrie involved in the case, we have more clarity and direction. Kerrie is also able to help us get access to state resources and clarify roles. I am thankful to have her involved in this case.
- above box. Always helpful, very informed. good suggestions for next steps.



- I am the foster care supervisor for a child who is currently living in a foster care office due to his intensive needs and lack of placement and treatment options provided by the state. The MCO was denying funding for PRTF placement, even though the PRTF already accepted him and had him on their waitlist. This was the only identified placement option for the child and the MCO was denying it, putting the child's safety and wellbeing at risk. The ombudsman elevated the concern and ultimately, the MCO overturned their denial of our request so we did not have to proceed with the state fair hearing.

**Caring Staff**

- I met the ombudsman at a conference and had a great conversation with her about the service they provide. I cannot remember her name, but I felt valued as a person.
- Kind people
- They were very positive and I felt comfortable knowing they were there to support me also

**Q10 - What didn't work well and could be improved in the KanCare Ombudsman Office?**

**Not Resolved**

- First correct phone numbers are not readily available -hold time too long

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- My problem was not fixed. We still had to wait hours on the line for a representative. Ombudsman just presented himself on the other line with me, but did nothing.

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- I should probably call my case manager as the resources offered by the Ombudsman were not helpful to me. I can understand how they may be helpful for some people, but not for me

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- Taking action themselves, I came to them needing help and all I received was verbal information. Which I already knew and had down on my own prior.

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- that they would tell you things instead of reading it out of book, then you say explain to me what you said, " they couldn't"

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- response time

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- Be there more often to get a hold of

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- Now the office is stashed by volunteers and I don't have a much confidence in the answers I might get.

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- The KanCare Ombudsman's office has grown from helping people get the services they need from the KanCare MCOs to a organization that wants to police all of Kansas Medicaid.

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- It took 10 months to get my husband approved for nursing home benefits. I needed something else, they lost the paperwork, they were backlogged, etc. No one cared or helped. By the time he was finally approved, he was near death or had died. I no longer remember.

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- These people treat e-mail like Instant Messaging. VERY unprofessional. Regurgitated KanCare's FALSE accusations. I was GUILTY until I PROVED my innocence. Lack of responses. Actually ADVOCATE for applicants or remove from website or de-fund feckless office.

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- The ombudsman's office has no teeth. Also there is a conflict of interest because they work for KDADS. It needs to be an independent office with authority to help enforce rules and provide true help to members when they call about problem resolution

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- Solve problems not defend insurance companies

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- No one was able to answer my question and I was shuffled around. One lady sent me tons of attachments not relevant to my question. Another person directed me to someone who retired long ago...

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- No one listens, the children are being abused and are CINC due to the father being incarcerated for drugs and violence in the home.

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- It's been hard to get a call back part of the time when I've called their office or I was passed on to someone else who passed me on to someone else who passed me on to someone else...

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- It would be great if the Ombudsman's office would get involved when there is a family member that uses all the money and assets from a resident, but is unwilling to fill out paperwork so the resident could receive government assistance.

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- It does not appear that they were was any follow up on the matter that was sent to them.

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- Just how long it takes for issues to be resolved. Do not believe it is " fault" of Ombudsman's office.

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- You will open "Pandora's Box" with this one. Suffice it to say your ability to provide meaningful and timely response to what we caregivers see as "Real Time" crises is impaired. Your office lacks adequate staffing and this alone puts you in a basically dysfunctional position to render aid to KanCare participants.

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- It can be hard to get a hold of the ombudsman office. It can also be hard to know which number office to call (i.e. do I call 1-855-643-8180 or 913-942-3161 or 316-978-3567).

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- I guess with anything, not getting the answer I want. But that's life.

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- In other occasions we have reached out for updates about KanCare renewals and to get more information, but did not hear back or receive any answers.

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- I felt the ombudsman was unprofessional and blamed others rather than be a person of middle ground
  - Calling in, I never got a call back. I emailed and got a response quickly. That is my preferred method of contact.
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- Excited to learn that online fact sheets updates are pending. Updated online E&D application to include choice for HCBS. Client complaints is not being able to reach someone at the Ombudsman's office by phone; shown discouragement for having to leave a voice and most chose not to and client's concern for not speaking to a real person when they called.
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- I believe you need folks at the program who are familiar with the on-line application so they can help folks who are having difficulty complete it. The paper applications take longer to process and documents get lost or misplaced. KanCare encourages folks to complete the application on line but then offer no support whatsoever when there are difficulties. You often get the response, we can't help there, we don't know how it works, apply via paper. Those are not effective answers especially when a family is in crisis.
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- They don't have a lot of information and when asked direct questions about the MCO's, they say they don't know and that the MCO's are allowed to do what they please.
  - Took a long time to get a callback and then they weren't able to help our situation.
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#### **Wanting legal advocacy**

- What my kid with a disability needs is intensive, legally-based advocacy and legal services. The KanCare Ombudsman does not do that. People who are getting the run around with KanCare need a lot of hand-holding, intensive case-management type services, and an attorney to provide services.
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#### **Need better outreach**

- Make contact information easy to find and advertise the services to the public more
  - If they contacted with a family organization, like Families Together, there would be more practical knowledge available to callers
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#### **Policy Issues**

- Like in other states, there should be more Ombudsman staff and they should have a greater ability to solve people's problems.
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- We need better care and resources in our mental health across the board. More stake in the care for this topic, and places for services for residential based services for kids
  - My hope would be that we would not have to climb the ladder in this way with our foster children moving forward. The agencies within the state of KS such as DCF, KDADS, CDDO, MCOs, etc. need to work together and make exceptions and adjust policies for the best interest of the children in our care rather than pointing fingers and denying services that they have the option to approve or make exceptions for.
  - The KanCare Ombudsman was great, the issue is that Kansas is behind in providing certain care initiatives for children with disabilities in the state, we are way behind our neighboring states.
  - Patients and families need to be better informed of their rights. This is a very stressful time for patients and families and Medicaid needs to be expanded in Kansas.
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- I think this is a problem with the system. There needs to be a review/overhaul of the procedures and policies regarding loss of residential HCBS funding upon arrest. The result of that policy is that people with disabilities are left homeless. Their funding stops so they no longer have a home, a place to be released to. All of their belongings are left sitting at their former home (residential provider). They have no assistance to find and finance a new residential placement. They needlessly sit in jail for months, away from the supports they need, in an environment that leaves them unsafe and open for exploitation due to their disability. This policy needs to change. The effects on the person with the disability (and their family) are outrageous. And it is costing the state so much more money to house someone in jail for 8 months instead of having them out in the community with residential supports where they can access the mental health services they need and maintain employment. I have been a foster parent for kids with disabilities for 25 + years. I have navigated the system and have connections others might not have. This situation frustrated me. It took months to remedy. I don't know how someone unfamiliar with the system would ever be able to navigate like we did to get someone with a disability out of jail and back in the community with the supports they need. The HCBS services my ward needed were gone at the time when he needed them the most.

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**Positive comments**

- I have not had an encounter that did not work well.
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- I feel they are an excellent resource for the LTC residents we serve. I haven't found anything negative.
- It was a great experience that had nothing that was challenging.
- I didn't have any difficulties. It would be great if they were able to present to our population and to our agency a couple of times a year.
- I can't think of anything that can be improved – every experience I have had with the Ombudsman's office has been very positive.
- All went well and resources offered were very helpful.
- everything went smoothly
- Everything worked just fine for me.
- Great resource
- I was able to get the families to the resources.
- No feedback for improvement. The office does a great job.

**Other**

- Minimal contact so nothing to contribute for this question.
- I actually had several different persons to speak with because the ombudsman for my area that I was working with was no longer with the State, but I did get help from one person who was covering that position and then the new person for our area was and is very helpful. I feel better knowing that I have someone to talk to. (Note: reference to Long Term Care Ombudsman Office)

**No Comment**

Cant think of anything at this time	no comment
Can't think of anything.	No concerns at this time.
N/A	No suggestions.
N/A	none comes to mind at this time
n/a	Nothing
N/A	nothing
n/a	Nothing
N/A	Nothing I can think of
N/A	nothing in our situation.
N/A	Nothing that I can think of
N/A	N/A

### Q12 - Have you heard of the KanCare Ombudsman Office before now?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	42.73%	47
2	Yes	57.27%	63
	Total	100%	110

### Q13 - Do you know how to reach the KanCare Ombudsman Office?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	59.09%	65
2	Yes	40.91%	45
	Total	100%	110

### Q14 - Do you think there are barriers to talking with the KanCare Ombudsman Office?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	No	58.72%	64
2	Yes	41.28%	45
	Total	100%	109

## Q15 - What barriers do you see to talking to the KanCare Ombudsman Office?

### How to contact

- didn't know how to contact them...

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- Not many people know that there is one or how to contact.

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- I know of the ombudsman but I never see how to contact the office.

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- I am really not sure on how to contact the Ombudsman's Office it would be good to have that information if I ever needed to contact them. The reason there is a barrier is because I am unaware of a phone number or an email to do so.

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- As an agency that works with people who use KanCare, I don't know how to contact you. Also, we have a GraceMed representative who comes to our office and helps clients with KanCare so maybe this Ombudsman isn't as needed for us.

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- I don't know how to reach them.

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### Did not know of the KanCare Ombudsman Office

- The fact that I have no idea what the KanCare Ombudsman Office is a barrier within itself. If I, as a state employee, have no clue what it is. I'm not sure how the other members of the community would know what it is?

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- I did not know it existed until this survey came up on Facebook. I have to wonder for those who don't have Facebook how are they able to participate in the survey? Is their a mailer being sent out? If so, not everyone has access to internet or knows how to use the internet. I appreciate the effort in getting your office and the resources it provides out there to people who could benefit from it. However, Facebook only reaches a percent of kancare recipients.

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- A lot of people don't understand what being on Medicaid requires. I was not told about a spin down. I just applied again a few months ago and they said I couldn't get help with medicacaoid because previously I didn't meet this spin down I know nothing of. I ask when I could ever get on Medicare again because I am now disabled and really need it. When I ask them how long or anything they say I don't know. If I knew about an ombudsmen I would have ask them if they could please give me answers

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- I didn't know it existed. So I didn't know it was available to families struggling with KanCare.

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- We didn't know they existed. We just called the clearing house and asked questions.

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- Working for a healthcare association I know of the resources available to KanCare recipients and providers. I do not if all those receiving KanCare or their families that assist them always know of the ombudsman or how assistance can be provided to them surrounding KanCare issues.

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- Have to know it existed in order to use.

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- General lack of knowledge that there is someone to contact.
- I was not aware of this

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- The information does not appear to be readily available to the general public. Something that was mailed to members or providers informing them of what the ombudsman does and how to contact them, would be a good start. The information seems to be lacking in this area. A definite barrier if a person doesn't realize such a thing even exists.

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- Don't know how to reach you and when I do it won't really do anything because your providers lie about everything. South Central Mental Health is poorly run, does not do what is in the best interest of children in their care, and needs to lose their license with you all for providing help to kids. If you truly look into wait times, lack of service provision, and how supervisors drop the ball and don't care how their actions look and feel to the families. But it doesn't matter- they'll figure out a way to talk their way out of it.

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- No saber donde llamar (translation: Not knowing where to call.)

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#### **More information about KanCare Ombudsman Office**

- Need more information about the program.

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#### **Other**

- spoken language and the wording of the english language. Having the right access to the KanCare Ombudsman office, not everyone has the right tools to access.

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- In the past families would call the ombudsman and then their problem was referred to the local DCF area and not resolved by the ombudsman. People want to know if they are calling someone for help they will be the one helping them.

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- wait times

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- I think it might have same issues as other services, Call volume, staffing. Getting to the right person and or follow up. Just a guess. May not be any problems at all.

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- cannot always call

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- Length of time for the office to call people back. Not enough staff.

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- I believe the communication needs to be worked on communication between everyone. Thank you

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- Timely return of calls. People really like the local outreach workers instead of calling.

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- lines are busy the most time

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- Information for patients and families

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- What we have heard from individuals that we have referred to KanCare Ombudsman for assistance is that they are being told that the assistance they need is not something that the KanCare Ombudsman helps with

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- I've never spoken with anyone, so I must wait to get a response

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- The name is intimidating to many and while I know to go to the website to get connected to the Ombudsman Office, our patients' families can barely say the word, let alone spell it in a web browser, especially if English isn't their primary language.

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- high phono call volume and language barriers.

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- Lack of knowledge and procedure.

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- It's hard to get through

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- I think people are afraid it will cause problems with their providers. They may get retribution after the fact, even if they are in the right.

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### **Policy Issues**

- I am raising my 17 year old with several disabilities and we at Children's Mercy hospital are talking about transitioning. Please keep in mind that my grandson is currently seeing 18 different specialist: I am confused and also frustrated that doctors are at Truman Medical Center can not take him or will see him because Truman medical Center does except Kansas Medicare???. I don't understand why Kansas medical center can take it with no problems: This needs address because a couple of his doctors for transitioning have also works at Truman. Please feel free to contact me so we May discuss this further.
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