

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE KANSAS FUTURES COMMITTEE

The members of the Committee met at 1:00 p.m. on February 6, 2001 at the Rolling Hills Assisted Living Center, at 2401 Urish Road, in Topeka.

All members were present except: Representative Karen DiVita - excused
Representative David Huff - excused
Representative Carl Krehbiel - excused
Representative Al Lane - excused
Representative Laura McClure - excused
Representative Gene O'Brien - excused
Representative Mike O'Neal - excused
Representative Gerry Ray - excused
Representative Tom Sloan - excused

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research Department
Lynne Holt, Legislative Research Department
Amy Kramer, Legislative Research Department
Lois Hedrick, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:
Diane Ellis, Director, Rolling Hills Assisted Living Center
Tom Bechtel, President, Kansas Center for Assisted Living (KCAL)

Others attending: None

This tour was originally scheduled for February 5, but was re-scheduled for February 6, 2001.

Diane Ellis welcomed guests to the tour of the Center. She described it as a social model rather than a medical model, with 30 apartments, 20 1-bedroom units, 6 mid-sized studios, and 1 large studio. Services provided include: cleaning each apartment once a week, transportation to medical appointments, meals each day, laundry, and an activity program.

The average census for the past five years has been about 95%. She states there is a huge demand for government-subsidized housing for seniors. Rolling Hills accepts private pay residents. The per person median is around \$2,200-2,500 a month, with a \$1,000 fee to clean apartments when vacated. She stated that "the HCBS-provider reimbursement rate is terrible and that is why most assisted living facilities do not participate. It becomes difficult to become profitable, yet there are people in the community that need assisted living". She stated that Rolling Hills cannot subsidize any more HCBS residents at this time because the reimbursement rate of \$14.05 per unit of service is too low (residents average two units a day).

The average time for residents to remain at Rolling Hills is two-three years, then they move to skilled nursing. Ms. Ellis stated there are huge problems in long-term-care: staff morale, retention, and salary. Rolling Hills does not have the wage pass-through that applies to Medicaid.

Tom Bechtel stated KCAL has 55 assisted living facilities as members, and also works in conjunction with the nursing home industry for continuum of care. He presented the organization's position statement on three issues relating to assisted living in Kansas. (See testimony, [Attachment 1](#).)

The group then toured the general areas and one apartment.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2001.



KANSAS CENTER FOR ASSISTED LIVING
221 SW 33rd Street
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Position on Issues

The Kansas Center for Assisted Living (KCAL) Board of Directors has met and adopted the following positions related to assisted living issues in Kansas.

KCAL is in favor of maintaining the current regulation structure. KCAL also favors the current system of enforcement and remedies. The system has proved it is effective through recent actions with assisted living facilities. KCAL is in favor of a system of more regular routine inspections or surveys.

The current irregular survey (inspection) patterns do not offer providers meaningful feedback at regular intervals. Many of the recent enforcement actions could have possibly been avoided with routine survey oversight, rather than response to complaints on extreme situations. KCAL is in favor of additional surveyors separate from the mental health surveyors who would deal exclusively with assisted living/residential care.

KCAL is in favor of maintaining and refining the current Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) structure.

Establish training for Area Agency on Aging case managers for consistency and to improve communication with providers. Ensure that case managers receive a true picture of the residents they are assessing. Often the brief observation and interview process does not reveal the full extent of the needs of the resident. Ensure that all case managers are aware of the range of services available for reimbursement through the HCBS program. Examine the reimbursement system for HCBS/FE services to determine if reimbursing based on hourly rates is the best approach for elders receiving services in the assisted living setting. An enormous amount of time is spent documenting services when billed at an hourly rate. The hourly rate structure was designed for home health agencies and is not necessarily the best use of time and resources in the assisted living setting. Reimbursement rates for providers for services must be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted for inflation in the cost of providing those services.

KCAL is in favor of a recognized continuum of care and believes it is the duty of the assisted living facility to provide the needed services and care to their residents in keeping with the Kansas Administrative Regulations.

When the assisted living facility cannot remain in compliance with the regulations and provide care to residents then the facility should help the resident find appropriate care and services elsewhere.

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