



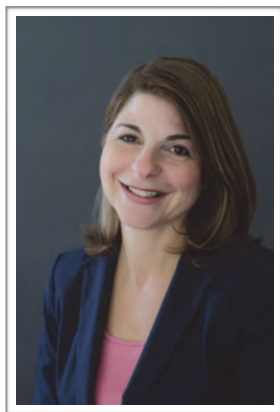
Massachusetts PATRIOT

Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA) FALL 2020

The Residents' Advocate—Management's Friend www.mlcra.org

The New Normal

by Elissa Sherman, President, LeadingAge MA



Elissa Sherman

I can say without a doubt, that the past nine months have been the most difficult time in the professional lives of anyone working in long term care and senior living, and it has been equally trying for the residents of these communities. Senior living organizations have been challenged in truly unimaginable ways as they have worked tirelessly to keep their residents and staff safe

and healthy. Back in the spring, recognizing the insidious nature of COVID and its ability to rapidly spread by asymptomatic carriers, senior living providers had to take decisive action to shut down their communities. For most CCRCs, this meant no visitors, no communal dining, no in-person events and activities. They quickly flipped their operations to deliver meals, mail and groceries directly to apartments in order to reduce face to face contact. They moved resident meetings, discussions and lectures to Zoom. They shifted fitness, concerts and other programming to virtual platforms including in-house TV stations.

As statewide efforts to slow the spread were successful and summer weather allowed for more outdoor activities, CCRCs worked to reopen various aspects of their operations. There is a keen understanding that access to amenities and

the lifestyle at a CCRC, however, **there has been no one size fits all process for how to reopen safely**. LeadingAge members have shared their processes and practices with each other, and different communities have taken a variety of approaches to assessing and mitigating risk. Some communities have focused on re-opening indoor dining areas (with reduced capacity and heightened infection prevention strategies) while many others do not foresee reopening indoor communal dining until the pandemic is better contained. In lieu of the gathering opportunities that residents are accustomed to, some CCRCs have developed creative policies to allow for residents to socialize together in small, self-selected groups or “pods.” The participants of the pod understand however, if one member of the group becomes sick or exposed to COVID, all others in the group may have been exposed and will need to self-isolate.

Regardless of the strategies employed, this pandemic has challenged CCRCs to balance the social, emotional, and physical safety needs of community members, while acknowledging that we all have different levels of risk tolerance. As the weather becomes colder and we are seeing a resurgence of COVID cases in Massachusetts, the following are key aspects of a “new normal” which will allow for that balance.

Adherence to Mask Wearing, Hand Hygiene and Social Distancing

I know everyone is tired of hearing this message, but we know that these strategies work to
(cont'd next page)

...there has been no one size fits all process for how to reopen safely.

New Normal (*cont'd from p. 1*)

prevent the spread of COVID-19. Even after a vaccine becomes available, we will probably see continued mask use and availability of hand sanitizing stations and infection control strategies well into the future, especially during cold and flu season.

Increased Access to Testing

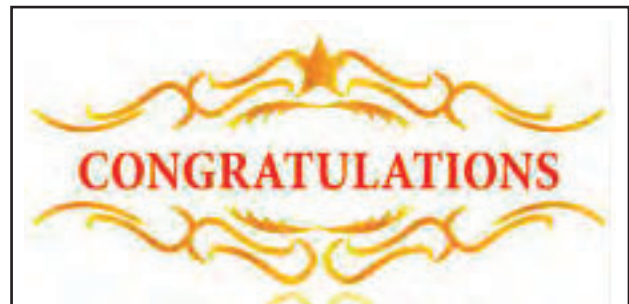
CCRCs with nursing centers are required to conduct ongoing surveillance testing of all staff at the nursing center. Some communities have chosen to test all staff who are on campus. Few senior living providers are testing residents except for those experiencing symptoms or who have been exposed. Compared with the spring, testing has become much more accessible with better turn-around times, and we are hopeful that rapid-result testing will become more reliable and affordable over time.

Use of Technology

A bright spot that has emerged in the pandemic has been the increasing use of technology. While many of us are “Zoomed Out,” the use of Zoom and Facetime continues to allow for critical connection and communication with families, friends and staff. Innovation through technology has also allowed CCRCs to maintain a high level of programming and engagement, one of the important reasons why individuals choose to move to a CCRC. Telehealth visits have increased access to clinicians without risking exposure. Technology is even being used to order groceries and make reservations to use community spaces and amenities. Communities have also invested time and resources into supporting resident’s adoption of technology. Whether purchasing devices for resident use, offering tutorials and IT support, or facilitating virtual visits with families and loved ones, adopting technological solutions to ease

the isolation that so many feel continues to be a key strategy on many campuses. Virtual visits have allowed prospective residents an opportunity to tour, and see first hand the benefits of living at a CCRC, even (or especially) in the midst of a pandemic. And the increasing use of technology will be welcome to the newer generation of older adults looking to move to CCRCs

As we move through these incredibly challenging and fearful times, we must remember that there is a bright future ahead. I am hopeful that we will take lessons learned during this pandemic and use that knowledge to enhance our experiences in the future. We will know more about how to keep each other healthy and safe, even during a regular flu season. We will have accelerated the adoption of technological solutions that will make our lives more convenient and connected. Most importantly, we will move forward with a renewed awareness of just how important community is to all of us. ●



Congratulations to Margery Hutter Silver, a resident of Lasell Village, who received one of five 2020 Member Honors in October from LeadingAge Massachusetts. She was honored for her ten years of service on the Lasell Village Board of Trustees, serving as the Chair of the Board for the past three years.

MESSAGE FROM THE MLCRA PRESIDENT *by Lauren Hale*

The summer issue of the Patriot featured the results of a survey about how MLCRA's sixteen member communities have handled the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Topics covered included communication with management, visitor policy, dining, house-keeping, and programs.

Several of the Resident Association (RA) presidents who answered the survey commented on the increased use of technology during the pandemic. Technology was important not only for meetings and programs but also for keeping families and friends connected.

Some RA presidents asked MLCRA to support efforts to help residents become more comfortable with technology. Allison Dolan, a board member from Brooksby Village, has agreed to be our first-ever Technology Chair. Allison has an article with tips on Zooming in this issue of the Patriot. She will be writing for the Patriot and the MLCRA website on other aspects of technology.

We have also heard from a few communities that communication with management was difficult at the height of the pandemic. These are unusual times. However, it is important to make our voices heard - whether by conference call, Zoom or in-person meetings.

Several years ago, MLCRA helped to pass a CCRC residents' rights law in the Massachusetts legislature. The law gives residents the right to

establish a Residents' Association. It also gives them the right to receive information about the organization, operation and finances of their communities and to comment on issues that affect their health and welfare. See www.mlcra.org/legislation for a link to the law.

Advocacy efforts with the legislature will continue. Joan Kerzner of Edgewood and Charlie Sokoloff of Orchard Cove have agreed to be MLCRA's Advocacy and Education Co-Chairs. As Joan notes in an article in this issue, one of her Edgewood neighbors happens to be Angelo Giambusso. Ang led MLCRA's effort in 2012 to pass the residents' rights bill.

This is the final issue of the Patriot in 2020. This year, the Patriot has carried stories written by residents of Brooksby Village, Southgate, Lasell Village, Orchard Cove, Sophia Snow Place, Edgewood, Briarwood, and Springhouse.

Over the past few months, the MLCRA website has posted photos taken by residents of Edgewood, Southgate, Lasell Village, Brooksby Village and Springhouse. The photos are scattered throughout the website. To see them, go to www.mlcra.org and click on links to inside pages such as Member Associations and Meetings.

We want to hear from more of you. Please send story ideas or photos to LHale20003@aol.com or jean.stringham@gmail.com Happy Holidays. ●

MEMBERSHIP GRACE YEAR *by Jean Stringham, Vice President for Membership*

The MLCRA board of directors has voted to make 2021 a grace membership year. We recognize the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of gathering in large groups.

Current members who have paid through 2020 will have their membership extended to the end of 2021. Those whose membership goes beyond 2020 will have a year added to their membership.

New members can provide contact information and enjoy membership in 2021 at no cost. They will be asked to pay the membership dues for the following year, 2022. A revised membership form is on page 11 of this newsletter and is on the MLCRA website. ●

MLCRA ADVOCACY

by Joan Kerzner, Edgewood



Joan Kerzner Photo: Leslie Kerzner

As Legislative Aide to the Assistant Majority Whip in the Massachusetts Legislature many years ago, I depended on my relationships with advocacy groups, and their “lobbyists,” to get information from people on all sides of an issue. If there is one thing you learn quickly working in any legislative arena, it is that there is no issue that is non-controversial.

No matter how benign the proposed law or law change is, or that it appears to be in everyone’s “best interest,” the bottom line is that some entity benefits and some entity does not. This may be a matter of perception, but perception is reality in politics! “Benefit” may be interpreted as gain or loss of

of power, control, recognition or money.

Therefore, one may never assume that changing a law can be done without touching base with all involved, as adjustments and/or compromises may be necessary to get everyone on board

So, as I begin my tenure accepting the Advocacy portfolio from MLCRA, and represent it to members of the Massachusetts Legislature in order to promote its legislative agenda, I’m reminded of how important it is to gather data and speak with people on all sides of an issue. It is also crucial to forge or continue alliances with other organizations that have overlapping interests, such as LeadingAge. Also – to be patient! The legislative process takes time, and progress very much resembles molasses (it also has been compared to a sausage factory). I also have big shoes to fill - my neighbor’s - Angelo Giambusso.

Currently, MLCRA is supporting two bills before the Massachusetts Legislature: **H.617/S.368 – An Act relative to disclosing continuing care retirement community entrance fees.** This would require that every resident entering a CCRC receive a separate document that discloses and describes the “terms, conditions and explanation of the process by which the provider shall make such a refund (of the entrance fee) to

the resident after the resident leaves the facility or dies.” The bill received a favorable vote from the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs and was sent in December 2019 to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, which has not taken any action. The Senate version was amended and sent to the Senate Ways and Means Committee in June 2020.

The second bill is **S.2774 - An Act authorizing the option of providing basic common sense health services for residents of assisted living residences.** “Basic health services” are defined as injections, application or replacement of simple non-sterile dressings; management of oxygen on a regular and continuing basis when the resident’s medical condition warrants; or application of ointment or drops. This bill combined previous House and Senate versions, received a favorable vote from the Joint Committee on Elder Affairs and also was sent to the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing in June 2020.

We will be following both bills as they move through the legislative process. Although Covid-19 has prevented visiting with legislators and holding in-person meetings, we hope to find creative ways to promote and advocate for our legislative priorities.●

What's On Your Mind?

by Joan Kerzner, Edgewood

Edgewood provides a rich assortment of educational opportunities for its residents through its Lifelong Learning program. One of the oldest offerings is called “What’s On Your Mind? (WOYM),” and was the brainchild of the late Harvey Beit and his wife Norma.

WOYM was conceived of and birthed in Newburyport, MA about 22 years ago, as “News and Views,” traveled to the University of Arizona’s Lifelong Learning Program with the Beits, and returned to Newburyport before making its debut at Edgewood when the Beits moved here about nine years ago. According to Norma, the main topic of conversation was, and continues to be, *politics*, “although never by intention or design.” Harvey always made sure, however, that the program was never used as a forum to talk about Edgewood services.

The weekly hour and a half program is led by a Moderator, and this position is held by a resident. Two models – one with a permanent Moderator, and one with rotating Moderators have been tried. Both seem to work well and depend on the availability and willingness of residents to take the leadership plunge.

Norma also notes that her experience of the program in various locations has differed slightly based on the ages of the participants. At the University of Arizona, for example, the attendees were recent retirees and therefore a bit younger than the typical population at a CCRC.

At Edgewood, WOYM convenes every Friday morning, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Pre-Covid, we all met in the auditorium around a large horseshoe-shaped table on which were placed about six microphones. The auditorium is wired for those whose hearing aids use the T-Coil system which enables a more accessible and enjoyable

experience for all. When the chairs around the tables are filled, participants sit in concentric rows of chairs just behind the tables and are encouraged to come forward to use a microphone when they wish to speak. Now, during Covid, the program is presented live every week on Zoom.

The Moderator begins by asking participants to contribute “items” for discussion and uses his laptop computer to list these on a large screen, along with the sponsor’s name. The list is now provided via Zoom “Screen Sharing” and residents have adapted well to these changes. Topics run the gamut of subjects from current events to human interest stories to “town” news to comments about owls! Every effort is made to include humorous topics each week. The Moderator’s job is to move down the list of topics, manage the time and recognize people who want to speak. *(cont’d on p. 7)*

1. Lets vote twice! (Ilean)
2. Markey sunrise coalition (Arnie)
3. Ballot Question 1: Right to Repair (Steve)
4. Ballot Question 2: Ranked-choice Voting (Toby)
5. Politics Hereditary? (Debbie)
6. Electoral College Issue? (Bobbi)
7. Yesterday's Dismal NYT front page (Ken)
8. Conflicting Medical reports (Toby)
9. Brady-Kinnin Hypothesis (Arnie)
10. Sources of News (Toby)
11. Pelosi Strategy? (Joan)
12. Dogs &* Dorks (Steve)
13. Vince's Dilemma (Steve)

Get Zoom - i n g !

by Allison Dolan, Brooksbv Village



MLCRA Board Members (l-r—row 1:) Mary Louise Enginmann, Allison Dolan. host; Jean Stringham, Eunice White, Caroline Jacobs, Jerry Lyle, Teresa Barton, Lauren Hale, Joan Kerzner, and Charlie Sokoloff.

By now, you have probably heard about people connecting virtually via Zoom. And maybe you haven't known what it was or how to do it. This article will cover some basics.

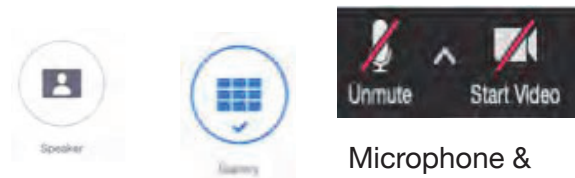
Zoom is the name of a free 'app' (application) that works on computers, iPads, tablets, smart phones, and other devices. Unlike some apps which are limited to certain types of equipment, or expect you to know "tech-y" stuff, Zoom works even if everyone is using something different and you don't need to know more than how to use email, and how to follow prompts.

Your device does need to have a camera and a microphone. If you are using a smart phone, iPad, laptop or similar handheld device, they are built in. If you are using a desktop computer, you may or may not have a camera and microphone—you may need to check with a technologically inclined friend for help.

You also need an email account.

In summary terms, a friend (called the "host") sends you an email, with a link. You click on the link, your "host" admits you, and you are part of the Zoom group. (The very first time you join a Zoom meeting, you will be asked a few additional questions - plan to sign into the Zoom meeting at least five minutes before the meeting starts.)

There are some key Zoom settings you need to be familiar with. View:



Microphone & Video

The 'icons' for the settings may not be visible on your screen until you swipe with your finger or move the cursor with your mouse. So if people are telling you 'look at the little grid in the upper right' and you don't see anything, try swiping or moving your mouse and see if anything appears. If it appears, you can touch it or (cont'd on p.

Zooming (*cont'd from previous page*)

click on it with your mouse.

The type of device you have determines how many people you can see on your screen at one time. Regardless of the device, if you don't see someone, you can swipe or click on an arrowhead to see more people.

There are two main ways to view. It is good to sign into Zoom with your full/proper name, so others know who you are, vs a cutesy nickname they may not recognize. Zoom puts the name below your picture.

“Speaker view” - In this arrangement, a large box shows the person who is speaking, and the other people in the Zoom meeting show up as smaller pictures on the top or side of the speaker. When someone new speaks, they will show up in the big box. (When two or more people are speaking at the same time, it gets very confusing.)

“Gallery view” – in this arrangement, everyone in the meeting gets the same size box; the number of boxes you can see at one time depends on your device. If not everyone fits on your screen, you can swipe or click on the arrowhead to see more. When someone speaks, the border of their box lights up.

The icon for setting the “view” is usually in the upper right corner of screen - remember, you may need to swipe or mouse click to get the icons to display.

Where there is a large group, the host may ‘mute’ everyone. This prevents multiple people from talking over each other. Some people mute themselves, so background sounds (e.g., phone ringing) aren't broadcast across the Zoom meeting.

To change from mute to unmute, or unmute to mute, look for the microphone, usually in the lower left. If it is red, with a line through it (as in the example), that means you have been muted. Touch it, or mouse-click it to “unmute”.

If other people see you talking and they can't hear you, you will hear cries of “unmute, unmute”!

If you don't have a camera (or if you don't want to share your picture), then instead of your picture showing, there will be a black box with your name in white letters. If you want your picture to show, then look for the video icon, usually in the lower left. If it is red, with a line through it (as in the example), that means the camera isn't in use. Touch or click on the icon to see if your picture shows up.

Once you have your picture and audio going, and “view” the way you want, you shouldn't have to make further adjustments. When the meeting is over, the host will close out the meeting – you don't have to do anything. If you want to leave early, then swipe on the screen, and you should see a “Leave” option in the lower right.

That's it! Happy Zoom-ing!●

WOYM (*cont'd from p. 5*)

The format also gives residents who were “experts” in their fields an opportunity to contribute their expertise. At Edgewood, like at most CCRCs, we have former scientists, nurses, physicians, lawyers, engineers, economists, political scientists, bird watchers, artists, teachers, etc., who delight in providing context or explanation. The program is extremely popular and is a win-win for all.●

Next Steps for Briarwood Television

by Peter Smith, Briarwood

Briarwood TV was launched in 2012 by a group of residents at the Briarwood Continuing Care Retirement Community in Worcester. Residents formed the Briarwood Broadcasting Committee (BBC). As reported in the winter 2016 Patriot, we learned about technical operations and became producers, interviewers, camera operators and editors.

Before this year's coronavirus pandemic, we were set to move into bigger studio space and switch to a new technology.

Prior to the pandemic we had a full programming schedule that included resident interviews, staff interviews, information and procedures from staff, several varieties of exercise videos, town meetings, resident association meetings, entertainment events in the auditorium, poetry reading nights, Briarwood Players performances, the annual Christmas Pageant, and speaker programs.

When we were informed that a new building was planned on the Briarwood campus, we negotiated with the Board of Trustees for our own studio space in the new building. We submitted a list of requirements for consideration. One of our goals was to have enough space to have our weekly meetings so that we did not have to schedule time in meeting rooms.

The space we were offered was beyond our wildest dreams until management realized that it had not provided space for the game room and pool table. Out came the scissors and our room was cut in half with a new size of 15" x 20". Not enough room for meetings but everything else that we needed fitted into the studio. We painted one wall green so that pictures could be imbedded into the videos. Computers, duplicators, printers, a TV, desks, workstations, storage space and interview chairs were provided - all new

Back in 2012, Charter Cable Company had provided us with two local access channels as part of Briarwood's contract with them. One channel was for announcements and the other was for TV videos. There was no extra charge. However, the electronics were all old analog technology equipment and cables. In subsequent years upgrading to digital equipment was out of reach for our budget.



Peter Smith

Photo: Roger Frost

Management became interested in a company called Touchtown, which provides TV service to communities like ours. It delivers community messages and information directly to residents through their existing televisions. The system operates via a Wi-Fi network. At the beginning of 2020, Briarwood made Wi-Fi available in all resident units.

The specialized video computer in the electrical closet that plays shows on our channel 900 and all the analog cables was replaced by a Touchtown black box with wireless capabilities. The Touchtown system is installed on a home computer, a laptop in the studio, and on a desktop computer in the studio. Technical support is provided via phone calls to Touchtown. Hard drives are replaced by a cloud-based system that will store all our video files. The system can play YouTube videos.

We had started planning the conversion from Charter to Touchtown when the pandemic hit. Our system was shut down. The Briarwood activities director was tasked with the conversion process, and a member of the Briarwood Broadcasting (cont'd on p. 9)

REMEMBERING SHEILA McMAHON, PATRIOT EDITOR

by Will Holton, Past President of MLCRA

Sheila McMahon (1941–2020) and her husband Jack were Life Members of MLCRA. Soon after they came to Springhouse in Boston, she learned that an editor was needed for the Patriot and told me that she might be interested in that important role. Soon she, my wife Susan and I were hosted for Sunday dinner at Newbury Court by Joe Strain who had been the editor for some years and had resigned for health reasons.

Sheila came to MLCRA with excellent qualifications. Born in New Jersey, she earned a degree in psychology from Clark University in Worcester. She had an impressive career at the Chelsea Human Services Collaborative, where she retired as its director after nearly two decades. Sheila created and maintained many programs while advocating for immigrant families in the community. Through those years she and Jack raised five children and she also volunteered in programs for families and children in Winthrop and nearby communities.

Sheila took editing the Patriot extremely seriously, working from an “office” in the apartment. She looked constantly for issues that would be important and of interest to MLCRA members, writing most of the articles herself. She encouraged my wife to write as the medical editor of the Patriot until Susan’s



Sheila McMahon with Will Holton at Central Mass. area meeting at Southgate in November 2016..
Photo: Tracy Griffen

declining health made it impossible. While I was the MLCRA president, I think it was mentioned in each board meeting that the excellent Patriot was the main service offered to our members and we needed to do more.

Even as Sheila’s health declined continually, she was president and vice president of the Springhouse Independent Residents’ Association. Until her passing, Sheila was essential to the community’s food services and library committees. ●

Briarwood *(cont’d from p. 8)*

Committee copied all our inventory of videos to a large hard drive. All resident activity came to a halt so there was nothing for the committee to do.

Due to the technical skill of the activities director, programming was slowly put in place. When our exercise programs were restarted, they were recorded and uploaded to YouTube for broadcasting. Zoom meetings were recorded, uploaded to YouTube and broadcast.

There have been Sunday church services from three local churches. Daily announcements, dining room menus, and other information have been available. Speakers and entertainers, under contract to Briarwood, provided Zoom lectures or YouTube videos for our use during the pandemic. Over the next few months, as restrictions are softened, the resident committee will start interviewing residents and staff again and resuming other programs. ●

MLCRA Board and Resident Associations

MLCRA represents thousands of older residents throughout Massachusetts. Its membership includes individual resident members and 16 Resident Associations.

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MLCRA COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The Briarwood Community,
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Brookhaven at Lexington

Brooksby Village, Peabody

The Commons in Lincoln

Edgewood, North Andover

Lasell Village, Newton

**Loomis Lakeside at Reeds
Landing**, Springfield

NewBridge on the Charles
Dedham

Newbury Court, Concord

Orchard Cove, Canton

The Overlook, Charlton

Sophia Snow Place
West Roxbury

Southgate at Shrewsbury

Springhouse, Jamaica Plain

Sweetwood of Williamstown

The Willows at Westborough

The Massachusetts Patriot

The Massachusetts Patriot is the quarterly newsletter of the Massachusetts Life Care Residents' Association (MLCRA). As the residents' voice, the Patriot covers news about Massachusetts retirement communities, monitors laws and regulations that affect residents of retirement communities, and serves as an advocate for residents' rights. Readers are encouraged to send letters or articles by email to:

Lauren Hale, MLCRA president and Interim Co-Chair of the Patriot Editorial Committee,
LHale20003@aol.com, 508-842-0515 or

Jean Stringham, MLCRA Vice President and Interim Co-Chair of the Patriot Editorial Committee,
jean.stringham@gmail.com, 617-244-2492

Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association

MLCRA Membership Application for 2021

(please print)

Date _____

1st Member's Name _____ New _____ Renewal _____If a couple, 2nd Member's Name _____ New _____ Renewal _____

Street _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Email _____ (for MLCRA purposes only)

Phone _____ (for MLCRA purposes only)

Retirement Community _____

Due to the pandemic we are waiving membership fees for 2021 for new members.***Current members will automatically have one year added to their membership. You may use this form to update your information.******Thank you!***

Please give this form to your MLCRA representative or mail it to:

Jean Stringham, VP Membership

130 Seminary Avenue #114

Auburndale, MA 02466-2661



Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association

Lauren Hale, MLCRA President
Southgate
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NOTE: The date next to your name on the mailing label above indicates when your membership expires.

<p>Join MLCRA now to maintain your quality of life!</p>	<p>What is the Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association?</p> <p><i>The voice of residents of Continuing Care Retirement Communities</i></p> <p>The Massachusetts Life Care Residents Association (MLCRA), founded in 1998, is a state-wide non-profit volunteer organization. It represents individual members and resident associations located in non-profit and for-profit retirement communities known as Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs) or Life Care Communities. These communities are also sometimes referred to as Life Plan Communities. They provide facilities and services for independent living and assisted living/skilled nursing care or both.</p> <p>The general purposes of MLCRA are communication, education, advocacy, and collaboration with members, resident associations and other organizations to support the well-being of seniors living in retirement communities. MLCRA is the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Continuing Care Residents Association (NaCCRA).</p> <p>MLCRA recognizes and respects the common interests of residents and management. It supports efforts to promote a mutually beneficial relationship. When the interests of management and residents occasionally diverge, MLCRA serves as the residents' advocate.</p>
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