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## **Hennen named state ombudsman for long-term care**

Cheryl Hennen, deputy ombudsman in the Office of the Ombudsman for Long Term Care since 2011, has been named to lead the office effective March 11. Hennen replaces Deb Holtz, who has been the ombudsman since 2007 and is retiring from state service.

The Office of the Ombudsman for Long Term Care is designated under the federal Older Americans Act and is a program of the Minnesota Board on Aging. The office investigates complaints about health, safety, welfare and rights of Minnesotans receiving long-term services and supports and works to identify problems and resolve individual concerns. The program also advocates for long-term care reform through changes in state and federal law and administrative policy.

“Cheryl has a strong commitment not just to the health and safety of long-term care consumers but to their empowerment so they can understand their rights, make informed choices about their lives and have their individual preferences and needs met,” said Jean Wood, executive director of the Minnesota Board on Aging.

Hennen became a volunteer ombudsman in 2003, joined the office in 2004 as regional ombudsman and later served as a policy specialist. She currently serves on the Department of Health Home Care Advisory Council. Earlier, she worked in the Disability Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services and for 18 years in county government in case management for people with disabilities, as a child support officer and as a child care assistance manager. She served for several years on the board of directors of The Arc Minnesota, an advocacy agency for people with intellectual disabilities. She has a degree in human services administration from Metropolitan State University and studied dispute resolution and mediation at Hamline University.

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