

Ombuds Services can:

- ◆ Listen to your concern.
- ◆ Research the situation.
- ◆ Assist with information/referrals.
- ◆ Provide advocacy and support.
- ◆ Provide education about the behavioral health system and your rights.
- ◆ Assist in resolving concerns at the lowest possible level.

Ombuds cannot:

- ◆ Provide behavioral health counseling or case management.
- ◆ Enforce a recommendation.
- ◆ Give legal advice.
- ◆ Guarantee a specific outcome.

Ombuds services are
free and confidential.

North Sound Behavioral
Health Ombuds provides self-
directed advocacy for
individuals receiving crisis
services and/or State and
Medicaid funded behavioral
health services in Island and
San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish
and Whatcom Counties.



**Learn how to be YOUR
best advocate.**

We are here to support & assist you.

**Local: 360.416.7004
Toll free: 1.888.336.6164
330 Pacific Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273**

North Sound Behavioral Health Ombuds

If you have questions or concerns about the service you are receiving and think your rights have been violated, please contact the Behavioral Health Ombuds for assistance.

You can do this!

You are your best advocate for the type of treatment and services you receive from your behavioral health provider. You are the ‘driver’ and you have the capability to take charge of your treatment plan.

Here are some great recommendations to help you in your recovery:

- ◆ **Get connected and build up your support network** through peer support programs, peer advocacy groups (NAMI), 12 step and/or recovery support groups, etc.
- ◆ **Be responsible for your own recovery.** Professionals cannot *fix* you. You and your family must become responsible for your own outcome. Ask yourself “Do I want my prescriber to *assist* me or do it for me?” This will happen only when you start standing up for yourself and take an active role in your recovery plan.
- ◆ **Learn about your diagnosis.** Learn everything there is to know about your diagnosis and medications. The more you know, the better advocate you will be.
- ◆ **Build a treatment plan and support program that works for you and one that will be sustainable.** Know your own situation. You have an active voice in your treatment and you know what you are willing to do and not do. Make the plan work for you.
- ◆ **Know what your treatment history and what has been beneficial.** Know what has helped and what made things worse. Track your treatment closely and make notes regarding what happens in different seasons or times of the year.
- ◆ **Advocate for yourself with your prescriber/clinician.** This can only happen if you **SHOW UP FOR YOUR APPOINTMENTS.** If you miss appointments, they will not think you are serious about your treatment plan.
- ◆ **Carefully explain your needs to your prescriber.** Advocate for yourself during your time with your prescriber to adjust your medications. Explain why you need certain medications and specify the rationale behind the request.
- ◆ **Know your rights.** Know the Community Behavioral Health Program. Your rights and the provider agency’s requirements are listed on-line as well as in the behavioral health benefits booklet.
- ◆ **Make an advance directive.** An advance directive is a written document that shares your preferences for treatment and care during times when you are having difficulty communicating and making decisions. It can inform others about what treatment you want or don’t want. It gives you control over what happens to you during periods of crisis.
- ◆ **Review your records when needed.** Know that there is a process in requesting your medical records.

Currently in crisis and need immediate help?

Call the Crisis Line:

1-800-584-3578

Available 24/7