Residents have the right to vote. Every year the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care honors residents living in a long-term care facility by designating a month (October) as Residents' Rights Month.

This year the theme is: "My Voice, My Vote, My Right" with the goal of educating the community about residents' right to vote and participate in the political process.

Across the country, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities along with family members, ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff and others will honor the individual rights of long-term care residents by celebrating Residents' Rights Month in October.

Designated by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, this month highlights the importance of listening to residents who live in our country's nursing homes, assisted living and board and care facilities.

"Residents' Rights Month is an excellent opportunity to re-affirm our collective commitment to residents' rights and to honor long-term care residents," said Sarah F. Wells, consumer voice executive director.

"We want to recognize that being a resident in a nursing home doesn't have to mean you can't participate in the political process. We hope to facilitate ways for residents to use their voice and their vote and take part in the election this fall."

Bring the Vote Home: www.bringthevotehome.com .

In the United States, the right to vote is one of the bedrock principles upon which this nation was founded. The Bring the Vote Home initiative was created to help sustain this right for senior citizens and persons with disabilities who may have difficulty participating in the election process.

Bring the Vote Home is a voluntary community initiative dedicated to assisting senior citizens as well as other home health recipients and their family members to exercise their right to vote. The patients and their home health providers make up a rapidly growing portion of the population, and their concerns and values should be heard and reflected by all elected officials. Bring the Vote Home seeks to make that goal a reality.

Nearly 3.5 million receive Medicare home health care services, which are delivered by approximately 500,000 skilled home health care professionals. Because these beneficiaries must be home bound in order to be eligible for the Medicare home health benefit, they may be unable to travel to their local polling place to participate in the 2012 election process.

Bring the Vote Home 2012 is dedicated to helping them overcome this obstacle so they can participate in the nation's important national and state elections.

Our voter registration services are available without regard to political preference. Information and other assistance regarding registration or voting shall not be withheld or refused on the basis of support for or opposition to particular candidates or a particular party.

Important dates to remember:

—to vote in the 2012 general election, you must be registered to vote by Tuesday, Oct. 9.
—a change of address form must be submitted by Tuesday, Oct. 30.
—the deadline to request an absentee ballot is Tuesday, Oct. 30.
—absentee ballot voting deadline is no later than 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 6.
—election day is Tuesday, Nov. 6.

"MY VOICE, MY VOTE, MY RIGHT."

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