

# CONFLICT



# **Independent Complaints Office** **regarding Age-Related Issues (UBA)** **Switzerland**

Violence in Old Age  
Summit on Elder Mediation  
Bern, May 9th, 2011  
Bertino Somaini



**UBA Schweiz**

UNABHÄNGIGE  
BESCHWERDESTELLE  
FÜR DAS ALTER

# UBA

**Independent Complaints Office Regarding Age-Related Issues**

contact office regarding conflicts and disputes of  
nds

primarily conciliation office attempting to find  
efficient, non-bureaucratic solutions built on  
consensus

fulfills this task mainly with professional volunteers  
from different fields

thus assists and relieves public services

# Independent Complaints Office Regarding Age-Related Issues

creates synergies

a center for professional services – also for government or staff of care facilities who have conflicts with clients or their relatives

complements existing social services

collects data and facts regarding abuse of older persons – a topic that is hardly researched in Switzerland

encourages quality promotion in institutions and in elder care

promotes prevention of elder abuse

# Who seeks UBA's services?

Elder persons and their relatives

Managers, care-givers, and nursing staff in  
elder care

Physicians

Other counseling services and

ombudspersons

Social services of cantons, communities and

private care facilities

Governmental agencies

BA is mainly built on volunteerism  
according to the motto:  
“Seniors help seniors.”  
except for a few part-time positions  
all professionals and staff  
persons work as volunteers and  
with high motivation.

BA relies on professionals depending on the conflict situation. The advantage of this approach is also a decrease of a certain hesitation – be it of the person concerned or of the accused persons or institutions. Depending on the situation clarification negotiations, or even a mediation could be indicated.

# Main Characteristics of the UBA

Independence

Cooperative capacity

Expertise

Volunteerism

Free counseling/consulting

# Process of the UBA

**Independent Complaints Office Regarding Age-Related Issues**

Complaints office responds/assists directly during one call

Referral to other counseling agency

Referral to a regional UBA (executive secretariat)

Verification by member of the expert commission

Discussion in expert commission

If necessary, seeking advice from other experts

Possibly referral to relevant next higher agency

# **Supporters of UBA**

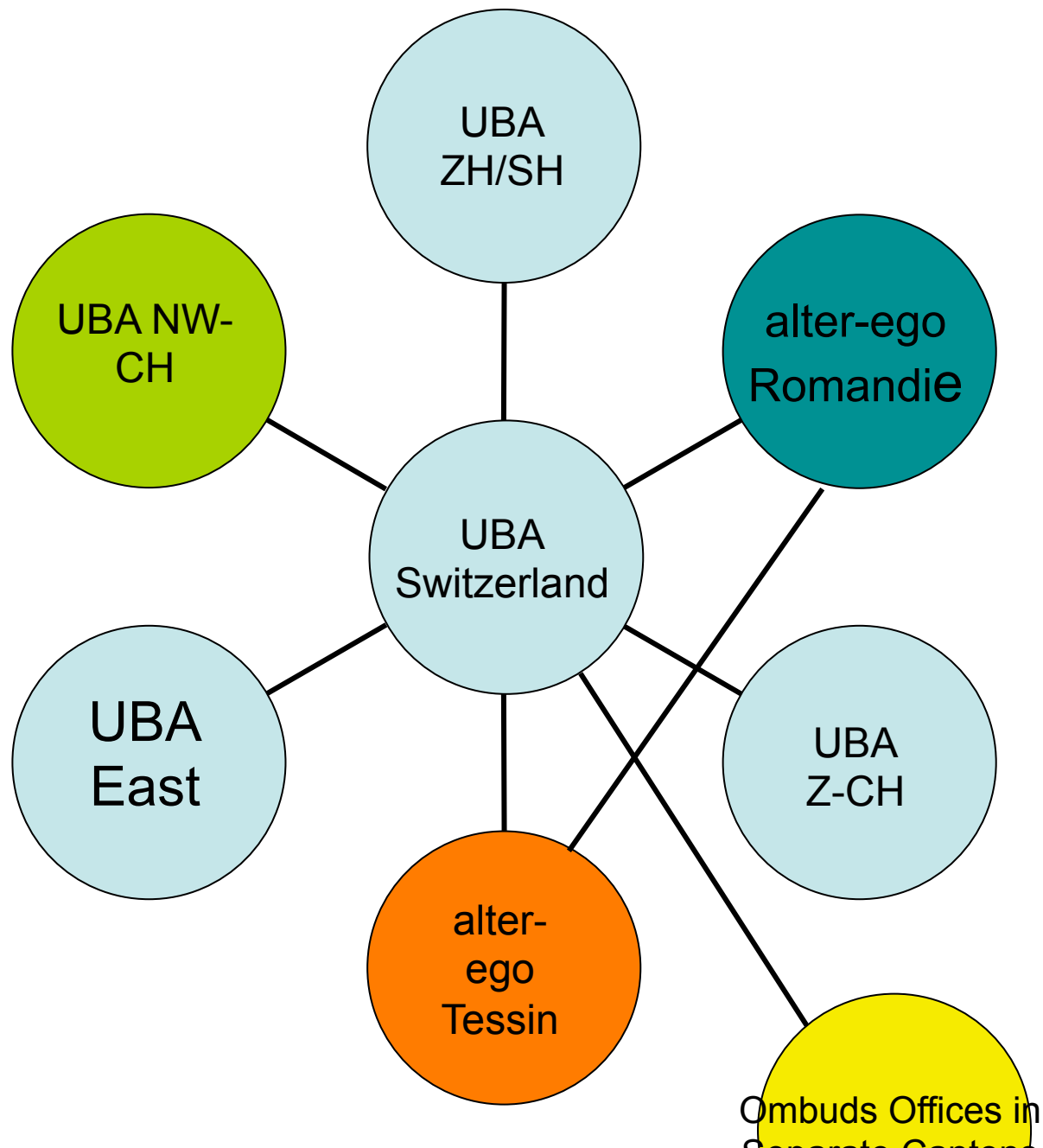
Curaviva (Home Association)

Swiss Red Cross

Pro Senectute (Elder Care Organization)

Spitex (nursing care at home)

# UBA: National Network (Future)



# Core Competencies

strategic approach

networking tasks, coordination

coordination with other agencies nationally/  
internationally

data processing / knowledge transfer

quality promotion

information available nationally (raising of  
awareness)

basis/resource for prevention

leading function of complaints office in Germa

# Categories (UBA 2010) 317 Cases

Short Counseling (Self-Help)	59
Conflict	146
Abuse	84
Active Neglect	13
Passive Neglect	4
Self-inflicted Neglect	11

# Relation to Person

Relatives	121
Person concerned	141
Director of care facility	16
Friends	
Government	
Acquaintances	
Neighbors	
Partner	
Nursing/care	
Social counseling	
External nursing care	

N=317

# Against Whom is the Complaint Made?

Director of care facility 128

Governmental agency 37

Relatives 30

Nursing/care 26

Doctor/dentist

Acquaintances

Person concerned

Business

Media

Neighbors

Partner

External care

Insurance/health insurance

# Figures from UBA Statistics 2010

Category of request	Elder Care Facility	Private/Home Care
Financial	80 (39%)	70 (61%)
Physical	29 (14%)	27 (24%)
Psychological	52 (26%)	9 (8%)
Violation of human rights	39 (19%)	6 (5%)
Other	3 (1%)	2 (2%)
<b>Total cases 2010</b>	<b>203 (100%)</b>	<b>114 (100%)</b>

# Type of Financial Conflict Situations

## **Financial Problem**

Payments/bills too high	40%
Insurance payment problems	21%
Agreement problems	19%
Unauthorized money withdrawal	10%
Theft	
Other	

# Type of Psychological Conflict Situations

## Psychological Problems

Living in community	29%
Limitation of autonomy	25%
Injured sense of self (self-esteem)	23%
Limitation of social contacts	15%
Limitation of personal freedom	8%

N=61

# Type of Physical Conflict Situations

## Physical Problems

Unsatisfactory bodily care	37%
Physical abuse/violence	18%
No assistance in urgent situations	13%
Care based on medication	11%
General and nursing care against will of concerned person	
Other	

N=66

# UBA's Services

Demographic development

Increase of older population

Higher number of persons with dementia

Growing potential for conflicts

Changing life styles

Different cultures

Increasingly breaking of tabus

Elder abuse becomes a topic

is established:

der abuse at home and in care facilities are a fact,  
so in Switzerland

ardly any other authoritative centers dealing with  
onflicts and abuse in old age

pecially lack of conciliation centers for personal  
atters and in the context of privately managed care  
cilities

ther organizations dealing with elder care are  
lieved to refer to an authoritative center in regards  
onflicts and abuse

Without a nationally coordinated process important  
pects regarding violence in old age would not or  
nly partially be dealt with

CONFIDENTE



058 450 60 60



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