

# Olivia Lawson

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**Practicum Site:** The Sycamore Institute

**Practicum Site Supervisor:** Sarah Henderson, M.P.H.

## ***What Long-term Supports and Services in Nursing Home Quality?***



**Introduction:** This practicum took place at The Sycamore Institute from June through October of 2022 in Sycamore's downtown Nashville office. The objectives were to write two effective, nonpartisan policy briefs on relevant health policy topics with multiple data visualization tools catered towards Sycamore's policymaker audience in Tennessee. The policy briefs explored long-term supports and services (LTSS) available in Tennessee, as well as variance in nursing home quality.

**Methods:** The skillsets learned included: nonpartisan public policy writing, data visualization creation, research agenda setting and prioritization, and collaboration with state public health government agencies. These skills were gained from workshops, reading assignments, group lessons, and one-on-one meetings. Once interns learn the background and style of how to write policy briefs for Sycamore, they begin to brainstorm research ideas with the policy team. The policy team receives input from relevant policymakers to narrow down topics to ones most relevant to Tennessee. Once research topics are decided upon, the interns begin their research and writing process. Final drafts are then passed onto the research team where they are edited, approved, and posted online.

**Results:** The outcomes of this practicum included increased policy writing, data visualization creation, and collaboration skillsets in the intern, fostered relationships with TennCare officials, and the authoring of two policy briefs. The final results of the practicum are published public policy briefs on Sycamore's websites for Tennessee policymakers and residents.

**Conclusions:** The achievement of the practicum goal resulted in summarized information of available long-term services and supports and highlighted areas of low-quality nursing homes in Tennessee that need policymakers' attention to increase availability and quality. This allows policymakers to adjust their goals through the identification of the gaps in nursing home quality and long-term care services through succinct and nonpartisan health policy writing.