



Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Learning About Nursing Homes, Part 1: Nursing Home Surveys

Posted by [Jonathan Rosenfeld](#) on February 15, 2011

For many families, there's a real feeling of helplessness when it comes to selecting a nursing home for a loved one or perhaps learning more about an existing one. Certainly, with many families living vast distances from their loved ones, I can sympathize as to the feelings of despair.

However, there is some good news. With nothing more than a computer and access to the internet, you can actually learn a great deal about the facility where your loved one lives. Sure, nothing will take the place of a visit to the facility itself, but with a little digging in the right spots you'd be surprised to see how much 15 minutes on the internet can reveal.

The Nursing Homes Abuse Blog will highlight some of these on-line investigative tools over several entries in the upcoming weeks. I always feel that when you have more information, you can make better care choices for your family and friends.

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog (www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com), Bed Sore FAQ (www.bedsorefaq.com) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757 (www.rosenfeldinjurylawyers.com).

"Surveys" are really inspections conducted by each state's department of health. In most cases, the surveys are done annually and are completed over a several day period where a group of health department officials look at all aspects of patient care. In situations where a complaint has been rendered against a facility, additional surveys may be completed on an as needed basis.

While surveys evaluate the physical characteristics of the facility, they may also review the care provided to randomly selected patients at the facility. Surveyors may look through the patients medical chart and evaluate if they are receiving the proper medical care.

When complete, the surveys are written up in standardized forms provided by federal authorities. If the surveyors find no problems with the care provided at the facility, the written survey will likely say no more than the date the survey was completed. However, if the survey identifies particular problems or violations, the specific findings will be noted with detail.

Once presented with the survey results, the nursing home must create a "Plan of Correction" that addresses and specifically explains how the violations will be corrected. The written surveys and plan of correction become part of each facilities permanent record.

Many states, such as Illinois, have incredibly extensive [Department of Health websites](#) that archive many of the surveys for each facility on-line. In situations where the survey is inaccessible on-line, it may be due to the fact that the findings are being disputed by the facility or a corrective plan has yet to be submitted by the nursing home.

Armed with a survey or group of surveys for a particular facility, you can then begin a comprehensive review of the facility. In upcoming blog entries we will

discuss how to make sense of the nursing home surveys and apply the surveys to popular nursing homes.

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