

# Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

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## Wheelchair-Bound Nursing Home Patients Must Be Properly Supervised To Avoid Injury



Allowing a nursing home patient to sit comfortably in their wheelchair in a hall or perhaps in an outdoor area of the facility seems like a pretty innocent act-- right? I mean aren't patients in wheelchairs entitled to a little fresh air or just hang out in a common area with other patients?

Despite the seemingly harmless act of sitting in a wheelchair, nursing home employees need to take steps to ensure the safety of these handicapped residents-- even if they appear to be sitting idly. Too often nursing home employees take for granted that wheelchair patients' limited mobility puts them at increased risk for falls and collisions with their surroundings at the facility.

A recent situation involving a disabled nursing home patient made the news, after the woman sustained serious injuries in a fall from her wheelchair. The woman's injuries include: fracturing her collarbone, sustaining a closed head injury and suffering multiple bruises and abrasions. The incident occurred at the Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania.

The incident gave rise to a lawsuit against the facility that alleges aides left the patients wheelchair unattended on a sidewalk that had a decline which caused the wheelchair to roll and crash into a nearby street. Read more about this nursing home lawsuit involving an injury to a wheelchair-bound patient [here](#).

### *The need to supervise patients in wheelchairs*

Putting a patient in a wheelchair does not relieve nursing home staff of their duty to provide ongoing supervision. Depending on the patients physical and mental capacities, they should provide a level of supervision appropriate to the individual. In most cases, providing a safe environment for wheelchair patients includes:

- Making sure locks on the wheels are engaged when the patient is sitting in one area or is incapable of appreciating harm

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](http://www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com)), Bed Sore FAQ ([www.bedsorefaq.com](http://www.bedsorefaq.com)) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

- Parking wheelchairs in areas where the ground is level
- Keeping patients in wheelchair away from congested areas when they could be pushed or bumped
- Properly utilizing leg braces to make sure they do not have the patients legs in a manner where they could catch on things
- Keeping patients away from fall hazards and unguarded stairways

Certainly, wheelchair-bound patients are entitled to freedoms, yet it remains the responsibility of nursing home staff to supervise them and assure that the wheelchair use does not put them at a heightened risk of harm to themselves or others.

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