



Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Another Assisted Living Patients Wanders From Facility To His Death

*Posted by **Jonathan Rosenfeld** on June 16, 2011*

It's a pretty thin line many assisted living facilities must walk between giving their patients freedom to go as they wish and protecting them from--- well,... themselves.

Today, I'm noticing that there are many assisted living facilities that simply view monitoring their patients as an afterthought and many residents who likely require supervision aren't getting as much as they require for their optimal functioning.

Sure making a determination as to: how, if, or when an assisted living resident can leave the facility is not easy. Yet, there may be no more important decision when it comes to the **safety of assisted living patients**. Certainly, as residents needs change, the staff needs to reconsider the safeguards it has in place for the patient as well.

I began thinking of this balance between giving patients freedom and ensuring their safety when I read about a man who wandered from a **North Carolina Assisted Living**

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).

Facility to his death. Just one day after Dallas Sherwood 'Sweet' Stevens walked from Aversboro Assisted Living Center, he was found dead in a small pasture.

Reports of his death indicate that 62-year-old Stevens had a cognitive impairment and required medication. Yet the Aversboro facility allowed the man to stay at their facility which was known to have an 'open door' policy, referring to the ability of residents to come and go as they wish.

Certainly, no one wants to unnecessarily restrain a person against their wishes, but it seems like the facility is certainly in a better position to assess the needs of a patient than any one else.

And one more thought...

Civil liability issues aside, when it comes to situations where a patient wanders from a nursing home or assisted living facility, I strongly feel that the facility should bear the costs associated by law enforcement when they conduct extensive searches for missing patients.

In the case of the search for Mr. Stevens, a Silver Alert was issued and more than 50 law enforcement officers and police equipment were diverted in the search for Mr. Stevens.

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