



Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Nursing Home Abuse: Facility Allows Patient To Cry In Pain At Fractured Leg Goes Ignored--- For 24 Days!

By **Jonathan Rosenfeld** on July 25, 2011

I'm not sure if it derives out of shame, fear or just plain laziness--- but I regularly see situations where a patients complaints of pain following an obvious injury, go ignored by the facility.

A recent horrific example of ignored patient complaints came from our peaceful neighbors to the North. Thestar.com reported on the case of a woman at a Canadian nursing home, that went 24 days without so much as an x-ray of her leg after she fell from her wheelchair and screamed in pain.

Finally, after 24 days of pleas from the patient's daughter and significant discoloration of the leg, the facility ordered an x-ray of the woman's leg--- which demonstrated that her tibia was indeed broken.

Situations such as this should never occur in any patient. In fact, in the states, such occurrences of uncontrolled pain are not only inexcusable--- but they are against the law!

Nursing homes have an obligation to provide pain relieving measures to their patients. While certain medical conditions such as **broken bones and bruising** may be obvious indicators that a

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patient was injured, nursing home staff must also be diligent to look for signs of distress in patients with less visible condition that require pain relief.

With disabled nursing homes patients, staff should take note of patients facial expressions, involuntary motor actions, moans and changes in behavior as potential indicators that the patient may indeed be suffering. After noticing these signs, the staff should timely contact the patient's physician.

The recognition of a patient's pain and subsequent pain relief is required pursuant to Federal Regulation of nursing homes. F-Tag 309 (Quality of Care) requires nursing homes to provide 'necessary care and services to attain or maintain the highest practical physical, mental and psychological well being, in accordance with the comprehensive assessment and plan of care.'

Despite some ambiguity as to the significance of 'highest level of practicable care' really means, the interpretive guidelines to F-Tag 309 provide more specific guidance for providing pain relief and unquestionably requires nursing homes to both monitor patients and provide them with sufficient pain relieving measures.